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STUDIES IN PALLAVA HISTORY

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Mahābalipuram. Adhivarāha Temple, Mahēndravarman and his Queens.

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Studies in Pallava History

BY THE

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MADRAS

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PREFACE

The following three lectures were delivered at the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona on the 3rd, 4th and 5th of September, 1932, to commemorate the 7th anniversary of the death of the great oriental scholar Sir Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar. The interest with which the lectures were heard and the requests of some of my friends have finally decided me to publish them in a book form.

The subject of the first lecture was slightly touched in my work on *The Pallava Genealogy*, published last year. In this book it has been studied more minutely and exposed more critically.

I hope that this humble contribution to the history of South India will, together with my *Pallava Genealogy*, be of some use for the elucidation of the history of the Pallava Dynasty, a Dynasty to which South Indian Culture owes an immense debt of gratitude and which nevertheless remains shrouded in obscurity and mystery.

I readily accept this opportunity to thank the Regulating Council of the said Institute for their inviting me to deliver these lectures on that occasion.

H. HERAS, S. J.

Bombay, January 15th, 1932.

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PART I

THE PALLAVA CONQUEST OF KANCHIPURA

I. INTRODUCTION

The Conquest of Kāñchīpura by the Pallavas is a fact of the utmost importance in Pallava History, as Kāñchīpura soon became the capital of the Pallava kingdom and as such was the centre of irradiation of culture all over Southern India. Mayūraśarma, the Karṇāṭaka Brahman, who was to be later on the founder of the Kadamba Dynasty of Banavāsi "with his preceptor Vīraśarman went to the city of the Pallava Lords...eager to study the whole sacred lore"[1].

Yet if you read any summary of Pallava history, even the latest work on the history of the Pallavas by Mr. Gopalan, it does not say anything definite about the conquest of Kāñchīpura. This is most astonishing, specially after considering the fact that the epigraphical records clearly mention the conquest of Kāñchī by a Pallava King. The Vēlūrpāḷaiyam Plates of Vijaya-Nandivarman III state: "From him (Skandaśishya) came Kumāravishṇu who captured the city of Kāñchī"[2]. Rao Sahib H. Krishna Sastri, while editing this inscription, says: "Kumāravishṇu, the son of Skandaśishya, is next stated to have captured Kāñchī"[3]. Yet a few lines after, referring to the same event corrects his first statement and even the statement of the epigraph as follows: "The capture, or rather the re-capture of Kāñchī attributed to Kumāravishṇu in these plates confirms Mr. Venkayya's suggestion that the town was not the Pallava capital for some time during

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1 Talagunda Inscription of Kakusthavarman, *E. I.*, VIII, p. 34.
2 *S. I. I.*, III, p. 510.
3 *Ibid.*, p. 502.

the interval between the Prākṛit period and the later Sānskṛit period"[1].

The same seems to be the opinion of Mr. Gopalan when he refers to "the capture of Kāñchīpuram by Kumāravishṇu"[2].

The theory of these authors is as follows. During the so-called Prākṛit period, *viz.* while the kings issued plates written in Prākṛit, and even in more recent times, the capital of the Pallava kingdom was Kāñchīpura. Subsequently Kāñchī was lost to the Pallavas and became a Chōḷa possession, during the hypothetical gap between the kings of the Prākṛit period and the Kings of the Sānskṛit period. Finally Kumāravishṇu reconquered Kāñchīpura, and with him the Sānskṛit period commences.

Mr. Gopalan himself acknowledges the difficulty of placing this Chōḷa occupation of Kāñchīpura between two groups of Pallava kings reigning at Kāñchī[3]. Yet he unfortunately does not try to solve this difficulty. Nevertheless he seems to suggest that this Chōḷa occupation may be rejected since it is only brought forward to explain the phrase of the Vēlūrpāḷaiyam plates about the conquest of Kāñchī by Kumāravishṇu,—a phrase which he qualifies as "a stray reference"[4]. Therefore he seems to prefer not to pay any attention to this "stray reference", to the introduction of a Chōḷa occupation of Kāñchī at this early stage of Pallava History.

All this confusion of facts and words — as for example the change of the word capture into re-capture—evidently comes from the presumption that Kāñchī had been the capital

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 503.
[2] Gopalan, *History of the Pallavas of Kanchi*, p. 65.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*

of the Pallava Kings prior to the conquest of it by Kumāravishṇu. And this presumption seems to be founded upon a gratuitous supposition and an epigraphical reference not properly understood. Let us examine these two arguments.

As to the first, it is quite clear that all writers on Pallava history have always supposed hitherto that Kāñchī had been the capital of the kingdom from the beginning of Pallava history. It is true that Kāñchī is the traditional capital of the Pallavas, but this does not mean that it was their capital from the time of the first Pallava King. In the same way Tanjore is the traditional capital of the Chōḷas. Yet before Tanjore became their capital Uṟaiyur enjoyed that honour. In the same way Bādāmi did not become the capital of the early Chalukyas till Pulikēśi I conquered it[1]. Likewise before the city of Dōrasamudra became the Hoysaḷa capital, Angaḍi first and then Belur had the Hoysaḷa Court within their walls. Therefore to make Kāñchīpura the Pallava capital from the time of the first kings of the Dynasty, without having any epigraphical record substantiating this fact, is a gratuitous supposition.

As regards the second argument, it apparently seems to have much more strength than the first. The Hīrahaḍagalli Plates of Yuva-Mahārāja Śivaskandavarman and the Mayidavōlu Plates of Vijaya-Skandavarman were both issued from Kāñchī[2]. Now these two sets of plates are written in Prākṛit. They are the earliest Pallava plates we possess. The Pallava historians hitherto, misled by the idea of separation of the two periods Prākṛit and Sānskṛit have always supposed, and sometimes vaguely stated[3], that the kings

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[1] *E. I.*, VI, pp. 4 and 8.
[2] *E. I.*, I, p. 7; VI, p. 8.
[3] Gopalan, *op. cit.*, pp. 40, 60.

mentioned in the Sānskṛit records were kings of the so-called Sānskṛit period and therefore they cannot be mixed with those of the Prākṛit records. The natural consequence of this principle is that Kumāravishṇu, who is said to have conquered Kāñchī, is to be placed after Śivaskandavarman, and Vijaya-Skandavarman, who issued plates while ruling at Kāñchī. Hence the conquest of Kumāravishṇu must be a reconquest, which supposes a period of time during which Kāñchī was lost to the Pallavas.

This question, as is easily seen, is intimately connected with the question of Prākṛit and Sānskṛit charters. It is therefore necessary to study the latter question thoroughly before arriving at a satisfactory solution of this difficulty.

The separation between the Prākṛit records and the Sānskṛit records has been so much exaggerated that some authors have also spoken of kings of the Prākṛit Dynasty and kings of the Sānskṛit Dynasty. We readily acknowledge that Prākṛit in general was used before Sānskṛit. Yet the use of these two languages was not separated suddenly, as if a king had forbidden the use of Prākṛit in future and ordered the use of Sānskṛit. Such a sudden separation would be unnatural. Whenever one language is substituted by another, there is always a period of transition during which both languages are used indiscriminately. There must be therefore a period during which the Pallava kings, or at least one of them, used both Prākṛit or Sānskṛit in their, or his, charters. This is confirmed by the discoveries of several scholars who found in some of the early Sānskṛit records certain points of resemblance with the Prākṛit records. Thus Rao Bahadur H. Krishna Sastri remarks that in the Ōmgōḍu Plates A of Vijaya-Skandavarman II "almost throughout the record complete words are separated by spaces, as in some

of the Āndhra inscriptions"[1], which were written in Prākṛit. Also Mr. Gopalan affirms that "the style and the language employed, from the use of numerical symbols and the citation of dates after the manner of the earlier Prākṛit charters, and the spaces marked between words, almost clearly suggest proximity to the Āndhra period"[2]. It is therefore improbable, nay nearly impossible, that between the period of the Prākṛit charters and the period of the Sānskṛit charters there should be a gap. The Sānskṛit charters were issued in continuation of the Prākṛit charters, and even as said above during a period charters in Prākṛit and in Sānskṛit appeared in indiscriminate order.

Let us now examine the early Pallava charters themselves. We have only three Prākṛit inscriptions: the Hīrahaḍagalli Plates of Śivaskandavarman[3], the Mayidavōlu Plates of Vijaya-Skandavarman[4] and the British Museum Plates of Chārudēvi[5]. We must first take note that three Prākṛit inscriptions are all too very few, upon which to build the whole structure of Prākṛit and Sānskṛit periods and strike the distinctiveness of the periods. Yet this structure will appear to totter more if we consider that the three sets of plates were most likely issued during a period not covering more than 25 years. Yuvarāja Śivaskandavarman and Mahārāja Vijaya-Skandavarman are now identified by all authors of Pallava history, and Chārudēvi was the wife of Buddhavarman, Vijaya-Skandavarman's son, her plates being issued during the reign of the said Vijaya-Skandavarman. Therefore the three

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1 *E.I.*, XV, p. 251, n. 5.
2 Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
3 *E.I.*, I, pp. 2-10.
4 *E.I.*, VI, pp. 84-89.
5 *E.I.*, VIII, pp. 143-146.

charters were issued during the life of Vijaya-Skandavarman.

Now we have seen that the earliest Sānskṛit records resemble the Prākṛit records and they belong therefore to the period of transition necessarily required to elapse between the period of Prākṛit records and the period of Sānskṛit records. Had a good number of Prākṛit records come down to us, especially if they had belonged to different reigns and years, there would have undoubtedly been a number of records of the Prāṛit period and a few—the most recent ones—belonging to the period of transition. Now at present we have no records of the Prākṛit period, and probably they never existed, as we shall see later on. Hence the only three Prākṛit records we possess belong to the period of transition.

If this is true, we have no right in dividing the Prākṛit and Sānskṛit records in such a way as to differentiate them into two groups chronologically disparate; and much less in supposing that the kings mentioned in the Sānskṛit records are totally different from those referred to in the Prākṛit records. There may, as a matter of easy supposition, have been a king who issued both Prākṛit records and Sānskṛit records.

II. THE FIRST CONQUEST OF KANCHI

Now if we examine the historical pedigree of the Pallava family given in the Vēlūrpāḷaiyam Plates we find that the first event of real historical importance mentioned in the record is the conquest of Kāñchī by Kumāravishṇu:

Kālabhartṛi, the head-jewel of his family.
Chūtapallava (nothing mentioned).
Vīrakūrcha, married a Nāga princess and grasped the complete insignia of royalty.
Skandaśishya, seized the *ghaṭikā* of the twice-born from King Satyasēna.
Kumāravishṇu, captured the city of Kāñchī.[1]

Evidently the first two names of this list are not names of kings, for the third Vīrakūrcha is said to have grasped the complete insignia of royalty. Those two names are perhaps taken from an original grant of Vīrakūrcha, now lost, who according to the ancient Hindu custom, mentioned the names of his two immediate ancestors. Vīrakūrcha therefore is to be considered the real founder of the dynasty.

The fact referred to in connection with Skandaśishya is a fact of some international importance but not of great interest. The only result of Skandaśishya's war with Satyasēna—perhaps a petty king of the neighbourhood in Āndhradēśa—was to seize the *ghaṭikā* of the Brahmans.

And then comes Kumāravishṇu who captured the city of Kāñchī. Evidently the author of the inscription intends to produce the impression that Kāñchī was conquered by this king for the first time: first, because, had this city been con-

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1 *S.I.I.*, II, p. 510.

quered by any other king, he would have mentioned this event against his name, as he did in the case of Kumāravishṇu; second, because if the Pallava Kings were ruling at Kāñchī from the beginning of their Dynasty, Kāñchī was not to be conquered by Kumāravishṇu.

Now if Kumāravishṇu conquered Kāñchī for the first time it is evident that the Hīrahaḍagalli and the Mayidavōlu Plates, which were issued from Kāñchī, must be dated after that event. Now, among the ancestors of Śivaskandavarman = Vijaya-Skandavarman we only know Bappa [1]. This king was wrongly supposed to be the father of Śivaskandavarman [2]. Burgess while editing the Hīrahaḍagalli Plates had only said that Bappa was probably the father of Śivaskandavarman [3]. I have proved elsewere that Bappa is to be identified with the first member of the Pallava family known to posterity, with the founder of the family, called in other inscriptions Kālabhartri [4]. We have seen that Kālabhartri and his son Chūtapallava were not kings in the proper meaning of the term [5]. Vīrakūrcha assumed all the insignia of royalty, yet he seems to have been a petty king, as there is no specific mention of his titles, or of any great achievement by which such titles could be assumed. The same must be said as regards Skandaśishya. As we have seen above the first great achievement of a scion of the Pallava family was the conquest of Kāñchī by Kumāravishṇu. Now we may ask, is there any manifestation of the effects of this achievement to be found in this or in other Pallava documents?

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1 *E. I.*, I, p. 8.
2 Jouveau-Dubreuil, *Ancient History of the Deccan*, p. 70.
3 *E. I.*, I, p. 4. Gopalan, *op. cit.*, pp. 33, 36.
4 Heras, *The Pallava Genealogy*, p. 14.
5 Bappa is called Maharaja in the Hirahadagalli Plates, but this title is very insignificant.

If we examine the Prākṛit records, which are the most ancient ones, and therefore must disclose the main events of that early period, we find that Bappa is given the title of Mahārāja only[1]. The same title seems to have been held by the unnamed father of Śivaskandavarman. For in the Mayidavōlu Plates he is called Yuva-Mahārāja[2] and not Yuva-Mahārājādhirāja. Yet if we examine the Hīrahaḍagalli Plates issued by the same Śivaskandavarman when he was already seated on the Pallava throne, we realize that he is already given the title of *dhammamahārājādhirājo*, "righteous supreme king of kings", *viz.* Emperor. This change of title was evidently caused by an extraordinary change in the status of the Pallava monarch. Such change could not be other than the conquest of Kāñchīpura, which put the Pallava King on the same level with the other great kings of Southern India. Now since this change of status took place during the life of Śivaskandavarman = Vijaya-Skandavarman, it is evident that the conquest of Kāñchīpura also occurred during his life. Hence it is necessary to identify Śivaskandavarman = Vijaya-Skandavarman with Kumarāvishṇu, the conqueror of Kāñchī.

Kumāravishṇu is said to have captured Kāñchī, and to have been "victorious in battles"[3]. The conquest of Kāñchī, being so important in itself, was only an episode in the series of compaigns against, and victories won over, his neighbours. It is but natural that he would celebrate all these victories and specially his capture of Kāñchī by performing the Agnishṭoma, Vājapeya and Aśvamedha sacrifices[4], sacrifices which denote the acquisition of an Empire.

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1 *E. I.*, I, p. 8. 2 *E. I.*, VI, p. 88.
3 Velurpalaiyam Plates, *S. I. I.*, II, p. 510.
4 Hirahadagalli Plates, *E. I.*, I, p. 7.

Against this identification it may be objected that the Mayidavōlu Plates were issued from Kāñchī, but before Śivaskandavarman had ascended the throne, when he was only the Yuva-Mahārāja. Hence Kāñchī was conquered during the reign of one of his predecessors. Yet if the text of these plates is carefully considered, one is inclined to believe that Śivaskandavarman himself, while being the Yuva-Mahārāja, during the reign of his father, conquered the city of Kāñchī. Had his father been in the possession of this city, he would have been honorifically mentioned. On the contrary his name is mysteriously kept in obscurity. Moreover the fact that these plates were issued from Kāñchī by the Yuva-Mahārāja, without even mentioning the name of his father, seems to be a hint that when the plates were issued, the Yuva-Mahārāja alone was at Kāñchī, the king his father being perhaps absent in the previous capital in Āndhradēśa. Such circumstances would naturally have taken place immediately after the conquest of Kāñchīpura, when his father, perhaps aged and ill, had not shifted his court to the newly acquired city as yet. It is therefore possible that the Mayidavōlu plates were issued immediately after the conquest of Kāñchī. Line 5 of this document strikingly corroborates this conclusion; for the grant of the village of Viripara is said to have been made to two Brahmans "for conferring on ourselves victory", *amhehi dāni amha vejayike*[1]. On account of this victory he is undoubtedly called Vijaya-Skandavarman in the Hīrahaḍagalli Plates issued when he was already a *dammamahārājādhirājo*.

The Kaśākudi Plates of Nandivarman Pallavamalla furnish us with a new argument in favour of the identification of Śivaskandavarman = Vijaya-Skandavarman with Kumāra-

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[1] *E. I.*, VI, p. 87.

vishṇu, the conqueror of Kāñchī. In line 45 of this inscription mention is made of eight early important kings of the dynasty, but among them, the name Kumāravishṇu is not found. Now this King, on account of his conquest of Kāñchī, should deserve at least a passing reference. Such silence cannot be explained. Yet after a short consideration we realize that this King is also mentioned here not with the name Kumāravishṇu, but with his other name, after omitting the prefix Vijaya or Śiva, being simply called Skandavarman. It is besides worth noticing that this name has been placed the first on the list, as if by doing so the inscription would remark that among the chief early Pallava Kings Skandavarman was the first.

The identification between Śivaskandavarman = Vijaya-Skandavarman and Kumāravishṇu will undoubtedly be strenghtened by noticing that these two names though different in sound are not different in meaning. They are the same, as will be seen in the following table. The names in question are the following:—

Skanda‿varman
Śiva-Skanda‿varman
Vijaya-Skanda‿varman
Kumāra‿vishṇu

Apparently his real name was Skanda. Varman seems to be the dynasty appellation. Śiva and Vijaya are only prefixed names, the latter probably being added to commemorate the conquest of Kāñchī. Now Kumāra is the second son of Śiva, the same as Skanda, otherwise called Subrahmanya or Kārttikēya. The change of Skanda into Kumāra is only a change of sound, but not a change of meaning. To the latter name the name Vishṇu has been appended, very likely on account of the eclectic views of the monarch. He is not the only Kumāravishṇu of the dynasty.

The identification of Śivaskandavarman = Vijaya-Skandavarman with Kumāravishṇu will finally be confirmed by the fact that their respective sons seem to be one and the same person. Vijaya-Skandavarman's son, according to the British Museum Plates of Chārudēvi[1], was Vijaya-Buddhavarman; while the son of Kumāravishṇu is also named Buddhavarman in the Vēlūrpāḷaiyam Plates of Nandivarman III[2], in the Chendalūr Plates of Kumāravishṇu II[3] and in the Vāyalūr Pillar Inscription of Rājasiṁha[4].

It is therefore beyond doubt that Kumāravishṇu, otherwise called Śivaskandavarman, while being the Yuva-Mahārāja during the reign of his father—probably ruling in Āndhradēśā — conquered the city of Kāñchī. This victory was followed by others, probably when he was already on the throne; so on account of his successes he perfomed the Aśvamedha and other sacrifices.

In connection with the capture of Kāñchī there is still another question to solve. From whom did Kumāravishṇu conquer the city of Kāñchī? The eulogy of Kumāravishṇu in the Vēlūrpāḷaiyam Plates does not add any information about this point, as if after recording the conquest of Kāñchī all other details were irrelevant. But there is a piece of information given against the name of Kumāravishṇu's son, which will probably be a clue as to the solution of this problem. King Buddhavarman is called "the submarine fire to the ocean-like army of the Chōḷas"[5]. It is therefore clear that Buddhavarman fought against the Chōḷas and destroyed their army as a submarine fire would destroy the whole ocean

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1 *E. I.*, VIII, p. 146.
2 *S. I. I.*, II, pp. 501-517.
3 *E. I.*, VIII, pp. 233-236.
4 *E. I.*, XVIII, pp. 145-152.
5 *S. I. I.*, II, p. 510.

(*sic*). These victories of Buddhavarman against the Chōḷas seem to be the continuation of the victories obtained by Kumāravishṇu. Probably the enemies of the son were the same as the enemies of the father. Towards the beginning of the III century the Chōḷas were a strong power on the south-eastern coast. The Toṇḍamaṇḍala was under their sway. Kāñchī was undoubtedly in their possession and was seized from them by Kumāravishṇu.

This was the first encounter between the rising Pallavas and the Chōḷas, the first of a long series of actions which ended fatally for the former when the Chōḷa king Āditya I defeated the Pallava King Aparājita towards the close of the ninth century.

This series of wars with the Chōḷas was not the only result of the conquest of Kāñchīpura. The change of status of the Pallava Monarchs after that event undoubtedly changed many a custom at the court itself. The first seems to be the issuing of charters. The oldest three Pallava copper-plates are the three Prākṛit records which were issued after the conquest of Kāñchī. We do not possess any record of the previous period. Probably the first Pallava Kings, being only petty chief in Āndhra-dēśa, had not issued charters at all.

Once this distinction between Prākṛit and Sānskṛit records and Prākṛit and Sānskṛit kings is discarded, there will be no difficulty in explaining how Śiva-Vijaya-Skanda-varman issued two Prākṛit records from Kāñchī after Kumā-ravishṇu, mentioned in several Sānskṛit records, conquered this city. Another change of great importance was as regards the official recording language of those deeds. Prā-kṛit had evidently been the official language of the first Pallava Kings. Śivaskandavarman = Vijaya-Skandavarman issued two charters in Prākṛit, the Hīrahaḍagalli and the Mayidavōlu Plates; his daughter-in-law Chārudēvi issued

another charter in the same language. But his son Buddhavarman, the husband of Chārudēvi, already issued a charter in Sānskṛit, the Darśi Plates[1]. And all the following Pallava documents are written in this language. Such change in the official Pallava language was undoubtedly effected by the change of capital. Kāñchī is one of the seven cities of Sānskṛit lore. Prākṛit was good for the petty kingdom and unknown capital of the Pallavas in Āndhradēśa. But the kingdom of Toṇḍamaṇḍala and its famous capital Kāñchīpura required Sānskṛit, the classical Indian language, as the language for such documents as were official. Buddhavarman acknowledged this need shortly after his father conquered the city; and by introducing Sānskṛit as the language of the charters he inaugurated a glorious period of Sānskṛit literature, which has Bhāravi and Daṇḍin as two of its most famous representatives, and which produced works as famous as the *Mattavilāsa-Prahasana* and the *Avantisundarikathāsāra*.

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[1] *E.I.*, I, p. 397. They are said to have been issued by the great-grandson of Virakurcha from the residence Dasanapura. Was this the old Pallava capital in Andhra-desa, or was it simply the accidental residence of Buddhavarman, while only Yuva-Maharaja during the time of his father? All these are only conjectures. But it is a fact now beyond controversy that the Darsi plates were issued by Buddhavarman. Cf. Heras, *Pallava Genealogy*, pp. 26-27, where most unfortunately a mistake crept in as regards the monarch who issued this charter.

III. THE SECOND CONQUEST OF KANCHIPURA

The descendants of Kumāravishṇu did not enjoy long the possession of Kāñchī. His great-grandson Skandavarman II issued the Ōmgōḍu Plates B not from Kāñchī but from the victorious residence Tāmprāpa[1]. His son Vishṇugōpa, while being only Yuva-Mahārāja, issued the Uruvapalli plates from Palakkada "in the eleventh of the victorious years of the great King Siṁhavarman", his brother[2]. Similarly three grants of Siṁhavarman II, Vishṇugōpavarman's son, were issued from different cities, the Māṇgaḷūr plates from Daśanapura[3], the Pikīra plates from Menmātura[4], and the Ōmgōḍu plates B from "the victorious royal camp"[5], the name of which is not mentioned. What then was the reason of their abandoning the newly established capital, the first city of the Toṇḍamaṇḍala?

One might perhaps suspect that the reason was a split in the royal family, and a consequent division of the kingdom, for precisely at this time we discover two parallel branches of the family, with at least two representatives in each of them. Thus while the kings of one branch were reigning at Kāñchī, those of the other branch could reign from another capital. Yet this theory cannot be supported, for the first king who issued a document from outside Kāñchī was not any representative of either branch, but Skandavarman II, the father of the two

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[1] *E.I.*, XV, pp. 249-252.
[2] *I.A.*, V, p. 50
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 154-157.
[4] *E.I.*, VIII, pp. 159-163.
[5] *E.I.*, XV, pp. 249-252.

kings who headed each branch. Moreover though the oldest branch of Siṁhavarman I, Skandavarman III and Nandivarman I did not issue any set of plates or any other document from any of these cities, yet the Uruvapalli plates of Vishṇugōpavarman were issued from Palakkada during the reign of his brother Mahārāja Siṁhavarman I. Hence Palakkada was probably the capital of Siṁhavarman I. Thus we have it that during three or four generations the Pallava family was exiled from Kāñchīpura.

The cause of this abandonment of the city of Kāñchī must be therefore a cause of common effect to the whole family. This is the time where the so-called Chōḷa *interregnum* must be placed, and not before Kumāravishṇu, as seen above. The Yuva-Mahārāja Vishṇugōpavarman was the famous "Vishṇugōpa of Kāñchī" defeated by Samudra Gupta in his southern expedition[1]. This defeat of the Pallava family by the Northern Indian Monarch naturally weakened the royal power, and that seems to have been the occasion when the old enemies of the Pallavas attacked them and drove them out of their capital. They conquered Kāñchīpura and all the territory around, and consequently the Pallavas had to retreat to the north of their dominions into the Telugu country, where all the cities mentioned in these charters seem to be located[2]. Mayūraśarman, the founder of the Kadamba Dynasty of Banavāsi, apparently also took this opportunity to rebel against the Pallavas and gain his independence[3].

A curious circumstance of the Ōmgōḍu Plates A reveals

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1 Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudra Gupta, Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, III, p. 13.

2 Cf. Venkayya, *Ancient History of the Nellore District, I. A.*, XXXVII, pp. 283-284.

3 Cf. Moraes, *The Kadamba Kula*, p. 26.

to us exactly when this defeat of the Pallavas by the Chōḷas took place. These plates were issued by Skandavarman II from Tāmbrāpa. Therefore Skandavarman II had already been driven out of the capital of the Chōḷas. Hence the defeat of Vishṇugōpa at the hands of Samudra Gupta took place when the former was only a prince, during the reign of his father Skandavarman II.

Who was finally the king who recovered Kāñchī from the Pallavas is not clearly said in the inscriptions. Yet there are sufficient hints given to us, enough to ascertain who the providential conqueror was.

The epigraphical records do not say anything about Siṁhavarman II, Vishṇugōpa's son, but they extol the martial activity of his grandson Siṁhavishṇu; and among his achievements, the conquest of the Chōḷa country is always mentioned. Thus the Vēlūrpāḷaiyam Plates of Nandivarman III say: "The victorious Siṁhavishṇu, whose power was widely known on earth. He quickly seized the country of the Chōḷas embellished by the daughter of Kavēra" [1]. And the Kaśākudi Plates of Nandivarman Pallavamalla similarly affirm: "Thereafter came Siṁhavishṇu, the lion of the earth, who was engaged in the destruction of enemies (and) who vanquished the Malaya, Kalabhra, Mālava, Chōḷa and Pāṇḍya" [2]. Mr. Gopalan, when commenting upon these two passages, refers to the conquest of the Chōḷa country, but says nothing about the conquest of Kāñchī. For him the Chōḷa country was only from the south of Kāñchī down to the Kāvēri river, which is presented by the author of the first inscription as the daughter of Kāvēra. As a matter of fact he seems to reject the Chōḷa *interregnum* at this precise mo-

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[1] *S. I. I.*, II, p. 510.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 356.

ment[1]; but he does not give any explanation why several kings prior to Siṁhavishṇu issued grants from different towns in the north and not from Kāñchī.

Yet having established the Chōḷa *interregnum* at Kāñchī while Skandavarman II and his successors were exiled in Āndhradēśa, the two above eulogies of Siṁhavishṇu must be understood as including Kāñchī in his conquest of the Chōḷa country.

The *Avantisundarikathāsāra*, an extract of another poem probably written by Daṇḍin, who apparently lived at Kāñchī during the reign of Narasiṁhavarman II, when speaking of this King says as follows:

....जज्ञे बुधव्रातध्वस्ताखिलविपल्लवः ।
पल्लवेषु महीपालः सिंहविष्णुरिति श्रुतः ॥
गरिम्णा स्थावरान् सर्वानोजसा जङ्गमानपि ।
यो विजिग्ये भुजश्लाघो भूभर्तृंनुभयानपि ॥

"In (the family of) the Pallavas there was born the King known as Siṁhavishṇu who had destroyed the last shred of adversity from the group of the learned.

"He being famous by the prowess of his arms conquered both the kings of the movables and of the immovables—the former by his splendour, the latter by his greatness" [2].

The poem, echoing the Kaśākudi Plates, repeats that Siṁhavishṇu defeated his enemies. Yet it adds a detail which is very precious for us. It states that he "destroyed the last shred of adversity from the group of the learned". This statement evidently refers to Kāñchīpura where the learned were gathered. The poet in order to flatter Siṁhavishṇu says that by conquering the town from the Chōḷas, Siṁhavishṇu freed the scholars from adversity.

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[1] Gopalan, *op. cit.* pp. 64-65.
[2] Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

Mahābalipuram. Adhivarāha Temple,
Siṁhavishṇu and his Queens.

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How far south extended the conquest of the Chōḷa country by Simhavishṇu may be guessed from the name of a village of Kumbhakonam Taluka. The modern village of Kanjanūr is called in an old inscription "Simhavishṇu-Chaturvēdimaṅgalam" [1]. This denomination, if it proves anything, proves that it was included within the kingdom of Simhavishṇu.

As a matter of fact Simhavishṇu's son Mahēndravarman I carved some caves at Trichinopoly and even at Sittannavāsal, Pudukkottai State. The musical inscription at Kuḍumiyāmalai in the same State is also attributed to him. Now we do not know of any war in the time of Mahēndravarman I, excepting the Pallava-Chalukya war produced by the first invasion of Pulikēśi II. The Chōḷas and Pāṇḍyas did not trouble the southern frontier of the Pallava kingdom. Hence all the territory over which Mahēndravarman ruled was inherited from his father Simhavishṇu, who had wrested it from the Chōḷas.

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[1] 265 of 1907.

IV. THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE CONQUEST OF KANCHIPURA

It is very difficult to assign any date to the first conquest of Kāñchī by Kumāravishṇu = Vijaya-Skandavarman. The early Pallava chronology is still very obscure and based only on conjectures. Mr. Gopalan who thinks that Vijaya-Skandavarman is much earlier than Kumāravishṇu (as the former is according to him a Prākṛit king and the latter a Sānskṛit king) puts against the name of Vijaya-Skandavarman the date "*circa* A. D. 280", without stating whether this is the date corresponding to the beginning of his reign or marking its end [1]. Kumāravishṇu is not given any date as if he were a king of secondary importance.

It is generally admitted hitherto that the beginning of the Pallava Dynasty roughly coincides with the beginning of the third century A. D., say 225. This is precisely the time when the Āndhra dynasty comes to an end in Āndhradēśa. Accordingly giving a medium of 25 years to each generation we arrive at the year 350 A. D. as the date corresponding to the end of Kumāravishṇu's reign. But since the conquest of Kāñchī took place while he was a Yuva-Mahārāja, probably towards the end of his father's reign, that important event must be placed around the year 325 A. D.

This calculation seems to be correct, for if we test it with the well known date of the Jaina work *Lōkavibhāga*, we find a difference of very few years between the date of our calculation and the date furnished by this work. Following our system of granting 25 years to each king, the ninth king of the Dynasty, Siṁhavarman I, commences his reign in the year 425 A. D. Now the *Lōkavibhāga*, is dated 380 S. E., that cor-

[1] Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

responds to 458 A. D.[1]. This date is according to the book itself the twenty-second year of the same Siṁhavarman I's reign. Therefore the initial year of his reign will be 436 A.D. A difference of 11 years in the course of 200 years, and when the calculation is found upon mere guessing, is not so great as to be taken into serious consideration.

As regards the second conquest of Kāñchī by Siṁhavishṇu, we also come across a great drawback while trying to fix its date, for we do not know of any document of this king. According to our calculation he must have lived during the second half of the 6th century being himself the 14th king of the line, his reign coming to a close towards 575 A. D. Now the conquest of Kāñchī probably took place in the beginning of his reign, as he would not undertake this difficult enterprise in his old age. Moreover the conquest of Kāñchī must have been one of the first actions of his campaign against the Chōḷas, as this city lies towards the north. Hence we may place the second conquest of Kāñchī by Siṁhavishṇu around the year 555 A. D.

These dates agree with the well known Chalukya dates, which we shall refer to in connection with Pulikēśi II's expeditions against the Pallava kingdom.

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[1] *M.A.R.*, 1909-10, para 112.

PART II

THE PALLAVA-CHALUKYA WARS

I. INTRODUCTION

The historians of Southern India have already studied these wars, but they have, I am afraid, been one sided. The historians of the Chalukyas, like Fleet, have consulted the Chalukya inscriptions, and the historians of the Pallavas, like Gopalan, have referred to the Pallava inscriptions; but both hove failed to compare the inscriptions of the Chalukyas with those of the Pallavas as regards this matter. This critical study is absolutely necessary if one finally wishes to investigate the truth and arrive at a definite conclusion about these wars.

II. THE CAUSES OF THE PALLAVA-CHALUKYA CONFLICT

As regards the causes of these wars the authors do not easily agree. Fleet seems to suppose that the mythical invasion of the South by a Chalukya King named Vijayāditya and his attacking Trilōchana Pallava may be the foundation of the long enmity between these two Dynasties[1]; but soon he declares that the account of the expedition and wars of Vijayāditya is "a mere *farrago* of vague legend and Puranic myths, of no authority"[2].

Rice supposes that the wars between the Chalukyas and the Pallavas in Southern India were only the outcome of the old hatred between the two families long before they entered India. "The name Chalukya...," says he, "bears a suggestive resemblance to Seleukia, and the Pallavas being of Parthian connection, as their name implies, we have a plausible explanation of the inveterate hatred between the two; and their prolonged struggles were thus but a sequel of the contests between Seleucidae and Arsacidae on the banks of Tigris and Euphrates"[3]. It is not necessary to refute this strange opinion of Rice, which is now entirely obsolete, and which has no other foundation than the remote similarity between the names of these two Dynasties and those foreign names.

Gopalan without investigating this question is satisfied by saying that "the actual causes of the conflict between the Chalukyas and the Pallava kings lie buried in obscurity"[4].

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1 Fleet, *Kanarese Dynasties*, p. 341.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 342.
3 Rice, *Mysore and Coorg*, p. 62.
4 Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

In spite of this difference of opinion, it does not seem so difficult to ascertain the real cause of the wars. The *Artha-śāstra* of Kauṭilya says: "Whoever is superior in power shall wage war...Whoever is possessed of necessary means shall march against his enemy"[1]. Pulikēśi II considered himself more powerful than his neighbours and consequently marched against them. No further reasons are to be looked for to explain the origin of the Pallava-Chalukya wars. This has generally been the cause of all the wars waged in India from the time of Kauṭilya down to the Modern British occupation.

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1 Shamasastry, *Kautilya's Arthasastra*, p. 317 (Mysore, 1923).

III. A LEGENDARY WAR

The first war between Pallavas and Chalukyas refered to in inscriptions does not seem to be historical. Several Eastern Chalukya inscriptions of a late period narrate that a monarch called Vijayāditya, who is supposed to be the grandfather of Pulikēśi I, with the desire of conquest invaded the South and was slain in war by the Pallava King Trilōchana. Dr. N. Venkata Ramanayya, of Madras, obsessed with the idea of the historicity of Trilōchana Pallava, has recently tried to defend the truth of this war between Vijayāditya and Trilōchana[1]. Our opinion about this action has been expressed elsewhere[2]. This war never took place for the simple reason that Vijayāditya is a fictitious person, and Trilōchana is only the personification of all the Pallava grandeur. This victory of the Pallava hero over the Chalukya invader is an embodiment of all the victories won by the Pallavas of Kāñchī over their traditional enemies the Chalukyas of Bādāmi.

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[1] Venkata Ramanayya, *Trilochana Pallava and Karikala Chola*, pp. 45-46.

[2] *J. B. H. S.*, IV, pp. 80-86.

IV. THE WAR BETWEEN PULIKESI II AND MAHENDRAVARMAN I

An account of the first war between Pulikēśi II and Mahēndravarman I is found in the Aihole inscription of Pulikēśi II, and in the Kaśākudi Plates of Nandivarman Pallavamalla. The Aihole inscription says the following:—

> "With his sixfold forces, the hereditary troops and the rest, who raised spotless *chowries*, hundreds of flags, umbrellas and darkness, who churned the enemy elated with the sentiments of heroism and energy, he caused the splendour of the lord of the Pallavas, who had opposed the rise of his power to be obscured by the dust of his army and to vanish behind the walls of Kāñchīpura"[1].

The reference of the Kaśākudi plates is much shorter:—

> "Then the earth was ruled by a king called Mahēndravarman who annihilated his chief enemies at Puḷḷalūra"[2].

The Kaśākudi Plates do not tell us who were the enemies of Mahēndravarman defeated at Puḷḷalūra, but all the Pallava historians acknowledge that they were the Chalukyas of Bādāmi[3].

Now at first sight these two passages seem contradictory, and accordingly Fleet, while relating the history of the Pallavas, says that Mahēndravarman defeated the Chalukyas at

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1 *E. I.*, VI, p. 11.
2 *S. I. I.*, II, p. 356.
3 Cf. Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 324; Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

Puḷḷalūra [1]; and while writing the history of the Chalukyas he speaks of the Chalukya victory over the Pallavas [2]. Yet after a short consideration one is bound to acknowledge that there is no contradiction at all.

First of all we realize that the account of the Kaśākudi plates is very sober and plain and even forgets to name the enemies of Mahēndravarman. On the other hand the account from the Aihole inscription is just the opposite, very verbose and obscure, on account of the protracted allegory. "He caused the splendour of the lord of the Pallavas...to be obscured by the dust of his army". This circumstance makes the first account more trustworthy than the second, for whenever in these inscriptions the poet is forced to record a defeat, this is done in a very metaphorical and intricated way.

Yet if one examines well the Aihole account one finds there no mention at all of the Pallava defeat. Just the opposite. The phrase quoted above—the splendour of the Pallava king was obscured by the dust of the Chalukya army—is purely metaphorical and means nothing; as we could probably say with equal truth that the splendour of the Chalukya king was obscured by the dust of the Pallava army: for whenever two large armies meet much dust is raised and the sight of one army is made obscure to the other.

The fact subsequently mentioned, that the Pallava King vanished behind the walls of Kāñchīpura, seems apparently to be the result of a defeat. Yet one cannot understand how after such a victory over the Pallavas, Pulikēśi allowed them to retreat to their capital without further molestation. Just on this point, the Kaśākudi Plates come to our rescue, and

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[1] Fleet, *op.* and *loc. cit.*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 350.

inform us that truly Mahēndravarman vanished behind the walls of his capital, but not before he defeated his enemies at Puḷḷalūra. This explains how Pulikēśi after reaching the neighbourhood of Kāñchīpura—Puḷḷalūra, the modern Paḷḷūr is in the Conjeevaram Taluka—did not march on the capital. This Pallava victory is hinted at in a veiled manner in the same Aihole inscription, when incidentally the poet says that the Pallavas "had opposed the rise of his (Pulikēśi's) power". This incidental phrase may seem to refer to some previous effort of the Pallavas against the Chalukyas; but it is not so. It refers to the opposition that they actually offered to the Chalukyas on this occasion; opposition which was so successful as to cause the "annihilation" of the Chalukyas. It is true that the Chalukyas were unopposed, or at least successfully unopposed for some time; otherwise they would not have been able to reach the proximity of Kāñchī, within the limits of the modern Conjeevaram Taluka. But at Puḷḷalūra the army of Pulikēśi II was finally defeated by Mahēndravarman I.

V. WAR BETWEEN PULIKESI II AND NARASIMHAVARMAN I

This defeat was undoubtedly the cause of the second war. Pulikēśi wanted to take revenge of the Pallava family. He waited for the death of Mahēndravarman, and as soon as his son ascended the throne[1], the Chalukya monarch again invaded the Pallava kingdom. It is clear that the war was caused by an invasion of Pulikēśi; for Maṇimaṅgaḷa, one of the battles of this campaign referred to in epigraphical records, is only twenty miles from Kāñchī.

The details of this second war of Pulikēśi II are only known to us through Pallava inscriptions. Among the Chalukya inscriptions there are only two vague allusions to it, in the Karnūl Plates of Vikramāditya I and in the Sorab Grant of Vinayāditya, the son and grandson of Pulikēśi respectively.

Now the three Pallava inscriptions that refer to this event are the Kūram Plates of Paramēśvaravarman I, the Udayachandramaṅgalam Plates of Nandivarma Pallavamalla and the above mentioned Vēlūrpāḷaiyam Plates. The Kūram Plates speak of this war as follows:—

> "Narasiṁhavarman . . . who wrote the syllables of (the word) *vijaya*, as on a plate, on Pulikēśin's back, which was caused to be visible in the battles of Pariyaḷa, Maṇimaṅgaḷa, Sūramāra, etc., and who destroyed Vātāpi, just as the pitcher born (Agastya) (destroyed the demon) Vātāpi"[2].

The account of the Udayachandramaṅgalam Plates is much shorter:—

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[1] Cf. Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
[2] *S. I. I.*, I, p. 152.

"Narasiṁhavarman, the equal of Agastya, the crusher of Vātāpi, who frequently conquered Vallabharāja at Periya-Bhumaṇimaṅgaḷa, Shūramāra and other places" [1].

The Vēlūrpāḷaiyam Plates only give this reference:—

"Narasiṁhavarman I famous like Upēndra (Vishṇu) who defeating the host of his enemies took from them the pillar of victory standing in the centre of Vātāpi" [2].

Three actions may be distinguished in this war:—

1st action. Battles won by the Pallavas. The main ones are three. (In the second inscription two names seem to be combined). Pariyala, Maṇimaṅgaḷa and Sūrāmāra, and on both occasions they are given in the same order. This circumstance may perhaps mean, that this is the chronological order of the three battles. There were moreover some other battles of less importance fought between the two enemies, for both records speak of other battles. Of the three places mentioned above, only one Maṇimaṅgaḷa has been identified hitherto. It is a village still called by the same name, twenty miles far from Conjeevaram. It is interesting to notice that during the first war of Pulikēśi and again on this second occasion, the Chalukyas advanced much towards the neighbourhood of the Pallava capital, for both battles were fought very near Kāñchī. Perhaps such was the special tactics of the Pallavas, on those days: by allowing the enemy to approach their own capital, the Pallava army was fresh, while the other was tired after long marches. Another advantage for the Pallavas was that they knew well the country round, and

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1 *I. A.*, VIII, p. 277.
2 *S. I. I.*, II, p. 508.

could consequently select the best place for them to fight their enemies.

We have fortunately another document that furnishes some new details about this campaign. This document is the *Mahāvaṁśa*. A prince of Ceylon, named Māṇavamma, came as an exile to the Pallava Court, while a usurper had taken the throne of his ancestors. He became a great friend of Narasiṁhavarman, who placed him "on an equal footing with himself regarding food and lodging and honour and equipage". It happened that Pulikēśi invaded the kingdom of the Pallavas while Māṇavamma was at Kāñchīpura. Narasiṁhavarman marched his army against the enemy leaving the Singhalese Prince at his capital. But the noble heart of Māṇavamma did not allow him to see his friend and protector in danger without joining him. Accordingly he set out against the Chalukyas, joined Narasiṁhavarman and helped him in crushing his enemies [1].

This account is confirmed by the Karnūl plates of the Chalukya King Vikramāditya I. This document affirms that Pulikēśi II, Vikramāditya's grandfather, was defeated by three allied kings [2]. One of the two allies of Narasiṁhavarman undoubtedly is Māṇavamma. But who is the other? We have no positive information about him. He might possibly have been king Kaṇḍuveṭhi, who according to the same *Mahāvaṁśa* was another friend of prince Māṇavamma [3]. The name of this king seems to be of Āndhradēśa [4].

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[1] *Mahavamsa*, pt. II, p. 35 (Colombo, 1909).

[2] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, XVI, p. 226.

[3] *Mahavamsa, loc. cit.*

[4] According to Krishna Sastri, *Two Pallava Statues*, pp. 9-10, Kaduvetti or Kanduvethi is an allied form of Kadava, this being the name given to the members of the Hiranyavarman's branch of the Pallavas. Fleet says "that the three confederate kings either were the kings of Chola, and Pandya, and Kerala, or belonging to the Pallava Dynasty". Fleet, *A Note in Connection with the Western Chalukya King Vikramaditya, I. A.*, X, p.134.

2nd action. Flight of Pulikēśi II. The Kūram plates inform us that Narasiṁhavarman wrote the three syllables of the word विजय on the back of Pulikēśi II as if it were a copper plate. We are not to take this literally, as some authors have understood. All this is only metaphorical and symbolical. The account nevertheless is partially literally true, in as much as the Pallava monarch wrote the word *vijaya* not on Pulikēśi's chest but on his back. This clearly means that Pulikēśi at the head of this army turned his back to the enemy and fled from the battlefield. Such seems to have been the fate of the Chalukya monarch in the three or at least in the last of the battles above mentioned.

3rd action. Capture of Bādāmi. Perhaps after the third battle and last defeat of the Chalukya army, the latter fled away without stopping before reaching headquarters at the capital, Vātāpi. This was a very good occasion for the Pallava King. His army pursued the Chalukyas, and triumphantly entered the Chalukya capital, Vātāpi. The name of this city—which is now called Bādāmi—being the same as the name of the demon Vātāpi, is the reason why Narasiṁhavarman is compared with Agastya, who is supposed to have destroyed that demon. How far it is true that the Pallava King destroyed the Chalukya capital, we are not able to say. Certainly the temples were deprived of their grants and revenues, as the Karnūl plates of Vikramāditya I inform us [1]. Perhaps some of its buildings were destroyed by fire. Probably the whole city and specially the royal palace were mercilessly looted. Very likely some people, including women and children, perished during the Pallava occupation of the capital. But the whole city was not destroyed. (Some of the beautiful temples which till now adorn the banks of the crystal-like

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[1] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, XVI, pp. 226-228.

lake of Bādāmi were most likely existing then). Certainly some of the caves were built in the time of Mangalēśa, the uncle and predecessor of Pulikēśi II, and they are still in a much better state of preservation than, for instance, the Elephanta Caves. During this Pallava occupation of Vātāpi—we do not know how long it lasted—an inscription of Narasiṁhavarman was engraved on a boulder in the neighbourhood of one of the temples, the Teggina-Īrappa temple. Fleet who published this inscription in 1830 found it in a very dilapidated state. A few words are only legible here and there. But among these words there is Vātāpi, the name of the city, and Mahāmalla, the title of Narasiṁhavarman. Nevertheless in the present fragmentary state one is not able to say what is the purpose of the epigraph [1]. Probably it was to record the victory of Narasiṁhavarman and the capture of the city of Vātāpi.

Did Narasiṁhavarman himself lead the expedition against the Chalukya capital? We do not dare to reply categorically to this question. It is true that such was the custom among the Hindu monarchs of those days. They always led their armies against their enemies. Yet on this occasion there is some reason to doubt, because the Tamil poem *Periyapuranam* clearly affirms that this expedition was placed under the command of general Siru-Tonda, otherwise known as Paranjōti [2]. Nevertheless we suspect that Narasiṁhavarman himself led the expedition, though general Siru-Tonda was at the immediate command of the army. Thus the phrases of the inscriptions are easily explained without need of distorting the original meaning of the words. Moreover on

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[1] *I. A.*, IX, p. 100.
[2] *Periyapuranam*, p. 452 (Madras, 1923).

Bādāmi. General view.

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account of this conquest of Bādāmi Narasiṁhavarman adopted the title of Vātāpikoṇḍa, capturer of Vātāpi [1].

What were the results of this Pallava expedition against Bādāmi? Two results especially may be mentioned: one physical and the other moral.

As regards the first one we are informed by the Vēlūrpāḷaiyam Plates that Narasiṁhavarman caused the pillar of victory, erected perhaps by Pulikēśi II in the centre of his capital after the series of glorious campaigns narrated in the Aihole inscription, to be removed from its place and probably to be taken to Kāñchī.

As regards the moral result, this victory of the Pallava King disorganized the whole administrative machinery of the Chalukya Empire, so much so that Emperor Vinayāditya the grandson of Pulikēśi could truly say in his Sorab grant that the lord of the Pallavas "had been the cause of the humiliation and destruction of the family (of the Chalukyas)" [2] Whether Pulikēśi himself died on the battlefield fighting against the enemy or not nothing certain may be said. Certainly nothing else is heard about this daring and enterprising monarch after the invasion of his capital by Narasiṁhavarman Mahāmalla.

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[1] *I. A.*, X, p. 100.
[2] *I. A.*, XIX, pp. 151-152.

VI. WAR BETWEEN VIKRAMADITYA I AND PARAMESVARAVARMAN I

The disaster suffered by Pulikēśi II was soon revenged by his son Vikramāditya I.

The documents refferring to this war are several and come from both sides. Accordingly we shall divide them into two groups:

A. *Chalukya Documents*

(a) Karnūl Plates of Vikramāditya I:

"Vikramāditya... who acquired for himself the regal fortune of his father, which had been interrupted by a confederacy of three kings;...and who conquered the hostile kings in country after country and reacquired the (regal) fortune of his ancestors"[1].

(b) Gadval Plates of Vikramāditya I:

"Victory was achieved by the lord Śrīvallabha, who crushed the glory of Narasiṁha, who caused the power of Mahēndra to be dissolved, who subdued Īśvara by polity... He who being fond of fighting and possessing splendid powerful shoulders, deservedly bears his own title of "wrestler with kings" (Rājamalla), (because) he has caused the destruction of the Mahāmalla family. The king, who defeated Īśvara-Pōtarāja, seized, like the girdle of the southern region, (the city of) Kānchī whose large rampart was insurmountable and hard to be breached, (and)

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[1] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, XVI, p. 226.

which was surrounded by a great moat, unfathomable and hard to be crossed"[1].

(c) Sorab grant of Vinayāditya:
Vikramāditya I "who received the city of Kāñchīpura, immediately after defeating the lord of the Pallavas"[2].

B. Pallava Documents

(a) Kūram Plates of Paramēśvaravarman I:
"Paramēśvaravarman I, "unaided, made Vikramāditya, whose army consisted of several *lakshas*, take to flight, covered only by a rag"[3].

(b) Vēlūrpāḷaiyam Plates of Nandivarman III:
"Paramēśvara I who crushed the conceipt of (his) enemies, (and was) a sun in destroying the darkness which was the army of the Chalukya king"[4].

(c) Udayēndiram Plates of Nandivarman Pallavamalla:
"Paramēśvaravarman, who defeated the army of Vallabha in the battle of Peruvaḷanallūr"[5].

Such are the only historical sources we have, to reconstruct the history of this war; a difficult task indeed, being, as they are, so contradictory. The three Chalukya inscriptions claimed a great victory over the Pallavas, and the three Pallava records also pretend to have inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Chalukyas. This difficulty is increased by a striking circumstance on both sides. Such claims of victories over

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1 *E. I.*, X, p. 105.
2 *I. A.*, XIX, pp. 151-152.
3 *S. I. I.*, I, p. 154.
4 *S. I. I.*, II, p. 511.
5 *S. I. I.*, II, p. 370.

enemies may sometimes be rejected as empty boasts, when no special details are mentioned that justify the claim. Whenever the capture of a town is referred to or the name of a battle given, or a particular enemy is said to have been slain, or anything of the sort, one is often bound to accept the statement, of the epigraph. Such is precisely the case on this occasion. The Chalukyas claim to have seized the city of Kāñchīpura; while the Pallavas commemorate the battle of Peruvaḷanallūr won by them over the Chalukyas. This means that the contradictory statements of both sides seem to be true. How to solve this puzzle?

It may mean that these inscriptions refer to two different campaigns, at different dates. One was successful for the Chalukyas, the other was successful for the Pallavas. Yet the circumstances are such, that the historian must acknowledge that these records refer only to two different phases of the same campaign, during which fortune was favourable now to one side, now to the other. What was therefore the order of events? Or in other words, who were successful in the beginning, and who at the end?

It seems that the Gadval plates of Vikramāditya I give us the chronological account of the eastern campaign of Vikramāditya. First of all the account of the capture of Kāñchī is introduced. Then the King seems to have turned southwards and when he made his grant he was "encamped in Uragapura in the Chōḷika province"[1]. Now Uragapura in the Chōḷika province, *viz.* within the dominions of the Chōḷas, connot be any other place but Uṟaiyur, the ancient capital of the Chōḷas, near Trichinopoly[2]. Again Peruvaḷana-

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[1] *E. I.*, X, p. 105.

[2] Cf. Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 104, n. 4; Jouveau Dubreuil, *The Pallavas*, p. 43.

Ilūr, the place mentioned in the Udayēndiram Plates in connection with the Chalukya defeat, is the village of the same name in the Lalgudi Taluka of the Trichinopoly District, about 12 miles from Trichinopoly itself[1]. Probably therefore when Vikramāditya issued his Gadval plates, he had not suffered any defeat as yet. It is but natural that only the capture of Kāñchī should be mentioned. The other Chalukya inscriptions do not mention the defeat either, for they take the Gadval plates as their model. Besides there is the general reason of not mentioning any unhonourable event for the King or for the Dynasty. After all, that is the reason why the conquest of Kāñchī by Vikramāditya is not mentioned in the Pallava inscriptions.

It is therefore evident that Vikramāditya's campaign against the Pallavas though first successful, finally ended in disaster. Hence two facts are to be studied in its connection: First the conquest of Kāñchī and then the battle of Peruvaḷanallūr.

Conquest of Kāñchī. While mentioning this important event the Gadval Plates referred to the defences of Kāñchī, *viz.* the insurmountable ramparts and the broad moat. The inscriptions do not tell us how Kāñchī was finally taken. Yet from a few details we may rightly surmise the course of the events. Paramēśvaravarman's army advanced and checked the progress of Vikramāditya, whose army (if we are to trust the Kūram plates) consisted of several *lakshas*. Probably the Pallava army did not go far from the capital, according to their custom. Yet unlike the two preceding occasions the Pallavas were defeated this time. That such a defeat preceded the capture of Kāñchī, is clear from the inscriptions. The Sorab

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1 Cf. Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

Grant distinctly says that Vikramāditya "received the city of Kāñchīpura immediately after defeating the lord of the Pallavas"; while the Gadval Plates aver that Vikrama "defeating Iśvara-Pōtarāja, seized... Kāñchī".

After this defeat the Pallava army seem to have taken refuge behind the walls of the capital encircled by a moat. How the capital was taken is hinted at in the same Gadval Plates when emphasizing the difficulties of such a capture. The rampart is said to be insurmountable and hard to be breached. Both things probably were effected; a breach was made in the walls, while at the same time the walls were scaled by at least a portion of the Chalukya army. Paramēśvaravarman successfully made his escape, for we see him again attacking the Chalukya army some time afterwards. Probably he retreated to Āndhradēśa, the original home of the family, for the Chalukya army was apparently not molested in their way to the south. They crossed the whole Pallava kingdom without opposition and encamped within Chōḷa dominions at Uragapura. That was the reason why when the Chalukya King issued the Gadval Plates from this camp the document could rightly say: "Victory was achieved by the lord Śrīvallabha, who crushed the glory of Narasiṁha, who caused the power of Mahēndra to be dissolved, who subdued Iśvara by polity...He who being fond of fighting and possessing splendid shoulders, deservedly bears his own title of "wrestler with kings" (because) he has caused the extinction of the Mahāmalla familly". As a matter of fact when this grant was made all the Pallava glory seemed to be extinct, the Pallava kingdom subdued by the Chalukya army, the Pallava King himself, fugitive towards the north. The Chalukyas perhaps rested a while on their glories. They did not guess that the revenge was soon, at hand.

The battle of Peruvaḷanallūr. Many details about this

action are given in the inscriptions. The author of the Vēlūrpāḷaiyam plates while stating that "Paramēśvara...crushed the conceipt of (his) enemies", seem to be acquainted with the proud expressions of the Gadval plates. The attack of Paramēśvaravarman was perhaps unexpected. Without help from any other king, "unaided", as the Kūram Plates say, the Pallava King with the army he succeeded to muster round himself, approached the neighbourhood of the Chalukya camp. He was riding his elephant Arivāraṇa "who appeared to be the king of mountains", his horse Atisāna accompanying him[1]. The Kūram Plates have kept a description of the Pallava army as it was advancing on this occasion: "The disc of the sun was caused to assume the likeness of the circle of the moon through the mist of the dust, that was produced by the marching of countless troops of men, horses and elephants, which was terrible through the thunder-like sound of drums, which teemed with unseathed swords that resembled flashes of lightening; in which elephants were moving like clouds, and which resembled an unseasonable appearance of the rainy season; in which tall horses looked like billows, in which elephants caused distress on their path, just as sea-monsters produce whirlpools; in which conches were incessantly blown, and which resembled the gaping ocean; which was full of swords and shields, just as of rhinoceroses, creepers and *varaṇa* (trees); which was crowded with heroes who possessed bows and mighty elephants, as if it were crowded with grass and with sundry kinds of trees; in which confused noises were raised, and which appeared to be a forest"[2].

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[1] *S. I. I.*, I, p. 154.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 153.

Vikramāditya soon offered battle to the Pallava King, but he was not successful. The Kūram Plates continue the description of the battle in a most picturesque manner: "Which was agitated by a violent wind, (but) in which the path of the wind was obstructed by arrows, that flew past each other on the bows (themselves), while these were bent by the warriors; in which javelins, pikes, darts, clubs, lances, spears and discuses were flying about; in which troops of furious elephants firmly impaled each other's faces with the piercing thunderbolts of their tusks; in which squadrons of horsemen were connected by their swords, that had struck each other's heads; in which there were soldiers who were noted for their dexterity in fighting with sword against sword, hair against hair, and club against club; in which the ground was thickly smeared with saffron, as the blood was mixed with the copious rutting-juice of elephants" [1].

The battle lasted for a long time. "In which", continue the Kūram Plates, "(both) large armies had lost and dropped arms, necks, shanks, thigh-bones and teeth; in which, owing to the encounter of the armies, both sides were broken, urged on, put to flight and prostrated on the ground; which was attended by the goddess of fortune, sitting on the swing of the doubt about mutual victory or defeat" [2].

Nevertheless Vikrama was finally forced to take to flight after leaving many of his followers slain on the battlefield. "In which", according to the Kūram Plates, "brave warriors were marching on the back of lines of fallen elephants that formed a bridge over the flood of blood;...which was covered here and there with shattered banners and parasols, with fallen elephants and with dead and half-dead soldiers,

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[1] *S. I. I.*, I, p. 153.
[2] *Ibid.*

who had done their duty, whose strong arms (still) raised the weapon, whose lips were bitten and whose eyes were deep-red with fury; in which a multitude of white *chāmaras* was waving; in which tiaras, armlets, necklaces, bracelets and earrings were broken, crushed and pulverized; in which the *Kūshmāṇḍas*, *Rākshasas* and *Pisāchas* were singing, intoxicated with drinking the liquor of blood; and which contained hundreds of headless trunks, that were vehemently dancing together in a fearful manner according to the beaten time"[1].

The further words of the Kūram plates, referring to Vikrama who is said to have fled away "covered only by a rag", are a poetical hyperbole. Yet they also may mean that the whole Chalukya camp was looted, and the army, headed by their King were forced to retire to their own country with only the dress and arms they had on[2].

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1 *Ibid.*
2 *Ibid.*, pp. 153-154.

VII. DID VINAYADITYA LEAD ANY EXPEDITION AGAINST THE PALLAVAS?

In 1879 Mr. Lewis Rice published the Vakkalēri Plates of the Chalukya King Kirtivarman II in *The Indian Antiquary*[1]. In this document King Vinayāditya, the son of Vikramāditya I, is said to have "captured the proud army of Trairājya, the king of Kāñchī"[2]. Accordingly Rice himself in his comments upon the epigraph admits without any discussion the seizing "of the whole army of Trairājya (Pallava) the King of Kāñchī"[3].

Such was the state of affairs historically speaking when in 1908 Prof. K. B. Pathak published the Kēndūr Plates of Kirtivarman II in *Epigraphia Indica*[4]. These plates are in many points similar to the Vakkalēri Plates, for instance the eulogy of Vinayāditya himself. Yet in this very eulogy the Kēndur Plates add a circumstance that satisfactorily settles the time of the expedition of Vinayāditya against the Pallava King of Kāñchī. Vinayāditya vanquished "the proud army of the confederacy of the three *(trairājya)* and the lord of Kāñchī, at the command of his father, just as Kārtīkēya, at the command of Śiva, defeated the very insolent host of demons"[5].

It is therefore now evident that Vinayāditya's expedition took place during the reign of his father. Moreover Prof. Pathak has translated *trairājya* as the confederacy of the three kings, the lord of Kāñchī being totally different from

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1 Rice, *The Chalukyas and Pallavas, I. A.*, pp. 23-29.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 28.
3 *Ibid.*
4 *E. I.*, IX, pp. 200-207.
5 *Ibid.*, p. 205.

them; while Rice had understood that *Trairājya* was either the name or at least a title of the lord of Kāñchī.

Now one may ask whether this expedition of Vinayāditya means a real different expedition from the one of Vikramāditya I[1], or whether it is perhaps a practical exaggeration, Vinayāditya *de facto* being one of the generals of his father's expedition. As such, being under his father, he could be said to have vanquished the lord of the Pallavas. According to the obvious meaning of this epigraph Vinayāditya cannot be a general of his father's army, fighting together with his father. The inscription avers that he vanquished the lord of the Pallavas "at the command of his father", which phrase seems to suppose that his father dispatched him against the Pallava King. Moreover if the mythological comparison means anything; it discloses that the son set out at the head of the army, his father remaining behind. In the same way as Śiva sent his son Kārtikēya to destroy the host of demons, himself not taking active part in the struggle.

Yet I do not dare to state that this expedition of Vijayāditya was totally different from the one of his father. If one carefully examines the above studied passages of the inscriptions referring to Vikramāditya I's expedition, one realizes as noted above, that before the capture of Kāñchī, the Pallava army was actually defeated at least once; but at the same time there is no inscription clearly stating that Vikramāditya himself defeated the Pallava King. The inscriptions use the phrase "after defeating" the Pallava King, which may

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1 So Mr. Gopalan seems to think, for on p. 123 of his work we read the following note 2: "Raid on the South by Vinayaditya, son of Vikramaditya". The text does not give any explanation. As a matter of fact one cannot explain how this note has been appended to this page.

be applied either to himself or to any one at the command of his army. No further evidence in his favour may be brought forward by that vague expression: "He caused the destruction of the Mahāmala family", or by this phrase from the Karnūl plates: "Who acquired for himself the regal fortune of his father". This vagueness is more striking if one considers the certitude of these documents, as regards the capture of Kāñchī: "Who received the city of Kāñchīpura", or: "Who seized Kāñchī".

It may be therefore that Vikramāditya I sent ahead his son Vinayāditya at the head of a considerable contingent of his army, and Vinayāditya inflicted the first defeat upon the Pallava King; and then after the arrival of the bulk of the army headed by Vikramāditya himself, they invested Kāñchī and finally took it by storm. Thus the truth of the Kēndūr Plates is saved without need of introducing a new expedition in the same reign of Vikramāditya I, which does not seem justifiable.

VIII. WAR BETWEEN VIKRAMADITYA II AND NANDIVARMAN PALLAVAMALLA

There is not a single Pallava inscription that refers to this war, a circumstance that may prove that the triumph was complete for the Chalukyas on this occasion. The only two Chalukya inscriptions that describe it, the Kēndūr Plates of Kirtivarman II, and the Vakkalēri Plates of the same King, are differing from one another but by a few words—a difference which is perhaps due only to a misreading of the editor. Thus Mr. Rice read that Vikrama slew the Pallava King where Prof. Pathak interpreted as "beat and put to flight". In general, the reading of Prof. Pathak seems more reliable not only because it is the more recent but especially, because on account of his being a Sānskṛit scholar of high repute it must carry great weight. Hence we shall follow the account of the Kēndūr Plates. This account will be divided into different sections, and a few comments will be added to the extracts of the epigrah, if necessary.

A. Purpose of the war. Vikramāditya II "resolved to uproot the Pallava foe, who had robbed of splendour the former kings of his line"[1]. This resolution of the Chalukya King again confirms that the campaign of his grandfather ended fatally. Had the defeat of Vikramāditya I preceded the capture of Kāñchī, there was no need of taking revenge, since the capture of the capital would have washed away all the previous dishonour.

B. Defeat of Nandivarman Pallavamalla. Vikramāditya II "on coming to the Tundaka District in great haste, beat and put to flight, at the opening of the campaign, the oppos-

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[1] *E. I.*, IX, pp. 205-206.

ing Pallava King Nandipōtavarman"[1]. The Chalukya army seems to have appeared in the neighbourhood of Kāñchī thoroughly unexpected, as the words "in great haste" disclose. This surprise was perhaps at least a partial cause of the defeat of Nandivarman. He does not seem to have resisted long the attack of the Chalukyas. He ignominiously fled away from the battlefield "at the opening of the campaign".

C. The flight of Nandivarman Pallavamalla. Nothing else is said about this affair in the pa ragraph devoted to the glories of Vikramāditya. But in the following paragraph that contains the eulogy of Vikrama's son and successor, Kirtivarman, there are several details referring to this campaign, at the time when Kirtivarman was the heir apparent. Among other things the inscription informs us that on this occasion Nandivarman Pallavamalla "had taken refuge in a fort"[2]. From the battlefield the Pallava King fled away to a fort without returning to Kāñchī. This explains how Kāñchī was so easily taken. What this fort was to which he went, we are not able to say. The Udayēndiram Plates of this King speak of a fort called Nandipura, where Nandivārman was besieged on another occasion by a confederacy of Tamilian kings[3]. Perhaps he also took refuge there on this occasion.

D. The causes of Nandivarman's defeat. We have pointed out above a partial cause of Nandivarman's defeat, *viz.* the unexpected arrival of the Chalukya army. Yet there were some internal causes which are not referred to in the Kēndūr Plates, but which we know from other epigraphical records.

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[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 206.

[3] *S. I. I.*, II, p. 372.

At the time of the death of Paramēśvaravarman II, Nandivarman Pallavamala, a member of a side branch of the family, was elected King of Kāñchī. He was a boy 12 years old. The Kaśākudi Plates dated in the twenty second year of this King tell us that he "was chosen by the subjects"[1]. But it seems evident that there was a considerable section of citizens dissatisfied with the new King. As far as his twenty first year of reigning he had still to face internal troubles from which he was saved by the faithful general Udayachandra. It was therefore not strange that some years before these events—for the Chalukya invasion seems to have taken place in the first half of his reign—the youthful Nandivarman was not helped by all his subjects to repel the invasion of the Karṇāṭaka Emperor.

E. Looting of the Pallava camp. The Kēndūr Plates continue stating that Vikrama "took possession of particular musical instruments called *katumukhavāditra* and *samudraghōsha*, the *khaṭvāṅgadhwaja*, many excellent and well known intoxicated elephants and a heap of rubies, which dispelled darkness by the brilliancy of the multitude of their rays"[2]. The two musical instruments captured by Vikramāditya were a harsh-sounding trumpet and a conch that was called "the roar of the sea"[3]. They were instruments, to the use of which only kings were entitled. These two instruments, together with a royal flag on which a *khaṭvāṅga*, *viz.* a bone crowned with a skull was represented, fell into the hands of the invaders. The *khatvāṅga* is a symbol often represented

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1 *S. I. I.*, II, p. 257; Udayendiram plates of Nandivarman II, *Ibid.*, p. 372.

2 *E. I.*, IX, pp. 205-206.

3 This is the same kind of conch that is represented in the hand of Vishnu. Its roar is supposed to create terror in the hearts of the enemies.

in Śiva's hands[1]. Besides, a goodly number of elephants and rubies were also seized by Vikramāditya.

F. Kāñchī taken possession of by Vikramāditya. According to the inscription, Vikrama "entered, without destroying it, the city of Kāñchī, which was, as it were, a girdle adorning yonder lady, the region of the south". The fact that he entered Kāñchī without destroying it seems to suggest that there was no opposition against his advance. As a matter of fact, the Pallava King having fled away to the fortress, his capital was practically abandoned to the mercy of the invader.

G. The Chalukya heir-apparent pursues Nandivarman Pallavamalla. Again for this episode we must get the information from the eulogy of Kirtivarman II in the same inscription. The prince is said having "asked for and obtained an order to put down the lord of Kāñchī, the enemy of his family, led an expedition, defeated the Pallava king in every quarter...made him powerless, took possession of many ruttish elephants, gold and crores of rubies and delivered them to his father"[2]. Also this was a crushing defeat for the Pallava King. The inscription acknowledges that on account of this victory Kirtivarman "thus gradually attained to the position of an emperor"[3]. The inscription does not say whether the Pallava King was captured. Probably he

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[1] The correctness of the Chalukya inscription may be tested by the inscription at the Vaikuntha-Perumal temple at Congeevaram, where at the time of the *abisheka* of Nandivarman Pallavamalla "the conch *samudraghosha*" and "the *khatvanga* banner" are also mentioned as being near the King. Cf. *E. I.*, XVIII, p. 117.

[2] *E. I.*, IX, p. 206.

[3] Ibid.

escaped to some other corner of his kingdom, whence he issued forth as soon as the invaders retired.

H. Behaviour of Vikramāditya II at Kāñchī. In the meantime Emperor Vikrama "rejoiced Brahmans and poor and helpless people by his uninterrupted liberality, who acquired high merit by restoring heaps of gold to the stone temple of Rājasiṁhēśvara and other gods, which had been caused to be built by Narasiṁhapōtavarman"[1]. The alms distributed by the Chalukya Emperor reached two kinds of persons: first Brahmans and then poor helpless people. He furthermore, unlike Narasiṁhavarman when conquering Bādāmi, was very liberal with the temples of Kāñchīpura and specially with the temple of Rājasimēśvara to which he is said to have restored heaps of gold. Fortunately a short Kanarese inscription has been found on one of the pillars of the Rājasiṁhēśvara temple confirming this statement of the Kēndūr plates. The inscription was engraved by "the blameless and illustrious Anivāritapuṇyavallabha," who probably belonged to the royal Chalukya family as his surname seems to suggest. The inscription runs as follows:—

> "Hail! Vikramāditya-Satiaśrāya, the favourite of Fortune and of the Earth, the Mahārājādhirāja Paramēśvara Bhaṭṭāra, having captured Kāñchi (and) having inspected the riches (belonging) to (the temples of) Rājasinghēśvara, gave (them) again to the god"[2].

I. End of Chalukya occupation of Kāñchīpura. The end of the Chalukya occupation of Kāñchīpura is not spoken of at all in the Chalukya inscriptions. Yet it will be worth the time to consider all the possibilities in order to arrive at a probable conclusion.

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[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *E. I.*, III, p. 360.

First of all we cannot persuade ourselves into believing that the end of the Chalukya occupation of Kāñchīpura was brought about by a defeat of the Chalukya army at the hands of Nandivarma Pallavamalla, as happened in the previous Chalukya invasion. If such were the case, the Pallava inscriptions of Nandivarman or those of his successors would undoubtedly have emphasized the victory.

Similarly one is to discard any possibility of an agreement by which the Pallava monarch would have acknowledged the suzerainty of the Chalukya Emperor; were it so, due mention of this great glory would have been made in the Chalukya inscriptions.

Nor may we conceive that the Chalukya monarch would have left Kāñchī for his own capital before making provisions for its maintenance, for that would be to willingly agree to its being occupied anew by his enemy Nandivarman Pallavamalla.

On the other hand Kāñchī and its District, in fact the whole Toṇḍamaṇḍala, is too distant from the centre of the Chalukya Empire to be annexed to it. The Chōḷas and the Pāṇḍyas would have at once risen and wrested it from the hand of the Karṇāṭaka sovereign. There was no other alternative for Vikramāditya than to leave the Pallava kingdom to its own destiny. Yet he could do so and at the same time obtain its allegiance by appointing a new king of Kāñchī, who would acknowledge his suzerainty. Such an act would have been folly in other circumstances, but knowing the unpopularity of Nandivarman in some quarters of his kingdom, he could do so with sure hope of success. For this he had to select a member of the royal family, nay one of the rivals of Nandivarman, one having many partisans and who would receive much support from within his own kingdom.

Is there any foundation for building such theory to be

found in the inscriptions of those days? We believe so. In the Udayēndiram Plates of Nandivarman Pallavamalla we come across the name of one Chitramāya who is called "the Pallava king"[1]. There is no satisfactory explanation as to who this king was. Jouveau-Dubreuil only says, that he "was perhaps an heir belonging to the dynasty of Simhavishṇu"[2]. Gopalan without further investigation says the same in different words, when affirming that Chitramāya was "a young prince who presumably had some claims by descent from Paramēśvaravarman II"[3]. By studying a little bit this interesting personage we may possibly deduce some useful consequences for our purpose:—

1. Chitramāya undoubtedly belongs to the Pallava family, as he is called Pallava king.

2. He very likely descended from the line of Simhavishṇu, as the two above authors state. For he was undoubtedly a rival of Nandivarma Pallavamalla who belongs to the line of Bhīmavarman.

3. We cannot state that he was the son of Paramēśvaravarman II, as Mr. Gopalan has suggested[4], for there is no foundation at all to make such statement neither in the Udayēndiram Plates, invoked by the author, nor in any other epigraph.

4. He was at the time referred to by the Udayēndiram Plates as enjoying royal dignity, since he is called "king".

5. He was a king within the Pallava kingdom, since Nandipura, where he was besieging Nandivarman Pallava-

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[1] *S. I. I.*, II, p. 372.
[2] Jouveau-Dubreuil, *The Pallavas*, p. 74.
[3] Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 113.

malla, is situated very near Kumbhakonam, and therefore within the Pallava dominions.

6. He was not a king of another Pallava kingdom, but a king of Kāñchī, for he was fighting against his rival Nandivarma Pallavamalla, whom he evidently wanted to uproot.

7. Yet he was not very popular within the Pallava kingdom, for in order to fight against the true king of Kāñchī, he found not much support within it and consequently he was forced to make an alliance with "the Dramila princes"[1], *viz.* the kings of the Tamil country, *i. e.* probably the Chōḷa and Pāṇḍya kings, who were the eternal enemies of the Pallavas. Moreover Udayachandra, the powerful zamindar of Vegavati, was not in favour of Chitramāya either. In point of fact he finally slew him in battle[2].

8. Having no support within his kingdom, he undoubtedly received foreign support to ascend the throne. Otherwise he would not have been able to attempt such an undertaking, since the real King was at large before Nandipura was besieged.

9. This foreign support could not come from the Dramila princes, for both the Chōḷas and the Pāṇḍyas had no other wish than to capture the whole Pallava kingdom and distribute it among themselves. They would never have put on the throne a new scion of the Pallava family. (If they helped Chitramāya against Pallavamalla, they undoubtedly did so hoping to turn their arms against the former after defeating the latter).

10. Therefore the only foreign power who could help Chitramāya to ascend the Pallava throne was the Chalukya Emperor Vikramāditya II, who had possessed Kāñchī for

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[1] *S. I. I.*, II, p. 372.
[2] *Ibid.*

some time, and who thus hoped to leave the affairs of the Pallava kingdom settled favourably for himself.

Yet he was fatally mistaken. It was undoubtedly true that Chitramāya had a good number of partisans within the Pallava kingdom, as Vikramāditya would not have selected a candidate to the throne without some national support. This support nevertheless was afterwards lost to him, as we see him allied with neighbouring kings who had formerly been the enemies of the Pallava kingdom. Why did he find himself without any help from his own adherents? When did he lose them?

The national pride was naturally too strong to allow the king to pay his allegiance to the conqueror Vikramāditya. They could not tolerate such a humiliation and loss of dignity, and consequently even his own partisans abandoned him to his enemy Udayachandra, who slew him. Thus Nandivarman Pallavamalla was again restored to the throne of his ancestors.

Before ending the history of Vikramāditya II's expedition we must refer to a fact that was the cause of the spreading of Pallava civilization in Karṇāṭaka.

We have seen that Vikrama entered Kāñchī "without destroying it". Especially he was pleased with the temples of Kāñchī, to which he restored their riches. As a matter of fact he seems to have been enamored of the architecture of the Pallava temples and wished to build similar temples in his own kingdom. This was most likely the reason why, when he retired from Kāñchī, he took with him some architects.

We have come to know two of these *sūtradhārīs*. In the Pāpanātha temple at Pattadakal there is an inscription recording the name of one of them:—

> "Chattara-Revadi-Ovajja of the Sarvasiddhi-Āchāryas, who was acquainted with the secrets of the Śrī-Śilēmudas (stone-masons), made (temples in) the Southern country" [1].

The name of the other architect is found in the Virūpaksha temple at the same place. This temple was built by Lōkamahādēvi, the first wife of Vikramāditya II, in honour of Śiva under the name of Lōkēśvara, though at present the temple is known as the temple of Virūpaksha. The inscription records the name

> "of the Sūtradhārī who made this temple of Lōkēśvara of Lōkamahādēvi, (the Queen) of Vikramāditya, the worshipful one, who three times conquered Kāñchī:
>
> "Hail! Śrī Sarvasiddhi-Āchārya; the asylum of all virtuous qualities; the Pitāmaha of many cities and houses; he whose conversation is entirely perfect and refined; he who has for a jeweled diadem and crest jewel the houses and palaces and vehicles and seats and couches (that he has constructed), the Sūtradhārī of the Southern country [2].

This naturally explains that wave of Pallava influence that is clearly discovered, when one examines the Chalukya temples built after the return of Vikramāditya II from Kāñchī and even in a later period. In particular the said Virūpaksha temple or the Saṅgamēśvara temple in the same village seem to have been stolen away from Kāñchī or Mahābalipuram. Their *vimāṇas* are evidently copied from the *vimāṇa* of the Dharmarāja's *Ratha*, at the latter place.

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[1] *I. A.*, X, p. 171.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 165.

Mahābalipuram. Dharmarāja's Ratha.

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Pattadakal. Saṅgamēśvara Temple.
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IX. THE END OF THE CHALUKYA WARS AGAINST THE PALLAVA KINGDOM

Not long after this event Vikramāditya II himself was succeeded by his son Kirtivarman II (746-7). This King, who had been very valiant and a son of fortune during the expedition of his father against Kāñchi, was very unfortunate as a ruler. His Vakkalēri Plates did not find any glorious act to mention against his name as a King, and were forced to narrate his exploits as Yuvarāja in the Pallava kingdom. Before ten years of his reign were over he had lost several of the northern provinces of the Empire; and soon after the whole Chalukya Empire collapsed, the Empire of the Rāshṭrakūṭas rising from its ruins [1]. The Pallava kings had nothing to fear from their enemies the Chalukyas.

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[1] Fleet, *Kanarese Dynasties*, p. 369.

X. THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE PALLAVA-CHALUKYA WARS

Before ending this subject it is the duty of the historian to settle the chronology of the Pallava-Chalukya wars.

A. First expedition of Pulikēśi II.

All the wars of Pulīkēśi mentioned in his Aihole inscription were preliminary to his entering Bādāmi and establishing his capital there [1]. Now the Hyderabad grant of the same king was already issued from Bādāmi in the year 612 A. D. If we place those wars two or three years before, say 609-10, we shall not be far from the true date. Hence the date of the first expedition of Pulikēśi II against the Pallavas may be fixed as beginning of 610, as several campaigns had preceded the one against Kāñchī. This date agrees with the usual Pallava chronology, as the reign of Mahēndravarman, the competitor of Pulikēśi on this occasion, is put between 600 and 630.

B. Second Expedition of Pulikēśi II and capture of Bādāmi by Narasiṁhavarman Mahāmalla.

This second expedition of the Chalukya monarch against Kāñchī is not mentioned at all in the Aihole inscription. Therefore it took place after this document was issued in 634-5 A. D. The downfall of Pulikēśi seems to have taken place before 643; for in this year a subordinate Chalukya prince in the Lata District of Koṅkaṇ issued the Kaira grant without mentioning his suzerain. He assumes the title of Raja only. He does not assert his independence, but at the same time he does not know to whom to offer his allegiance [2]. This suggests that the grant was issued at the time of the chaos

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[1] *E. I.*, VI, p. 11.
[2] *I. A.*, VII, p. 241.

that followed the conquest of Bādāmi by Narasiṁhavarman and the death of Pulikēśi. Therefore the conquest of Vātāpi should be placed between 634-5 and 643. Fleet puts it in 642[1]. Yet I am inclined to believe that this date is too late. Narasiṁhavarman seems to have suceeded his father in about 630 A. D. Now it seems probable that Pulikēśi would decide to take revenge of the previous defeat, soon after his accession to the throne, taking advantage of the Pallava King's youth and inexperience. Therefore I would place the second expedition of Pulikēśi against Kāñchī and subsequent Pallava conquest of Bādāmi in the year 636-7 A. D.

C. Expedition of Vikramāditya I.

The settling of the chronology of this expedition is not difficult at all, as the Gadval Plates of Vikramāditya I were, as seen above, issued from Uragapura after the conquest of Kāñchī and before the battle of Peruvaḷanallūr. Fortunately the grant is dated; it was the full moon *tithi* of Vaiśakha in the twentieth year of the reign, which was current after the year 596 Śaka Saṁvat had expired. This date seems to correspond to April 25th, 674 A. D. Probably therefore the conquest of Kāñchī took place in the beginning of the year, and the battle of Peruvaḷanallūr towards the end.

D. Expedition of Vikramāditya II.

Mr. Gopalan affirms that in all probability this expedition took place between 733 A. D. and 746 A. D.[2]. He could say it in all certainty, for these two dates mark the beginning and the end of Emperor Vikramāditya II's reign[3]. But this period of time seems too long; we might be a little more precise. Gopalan assigns the year 710 to the beginning of

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1 Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 359.
2 Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 122.
3 Fleet, *op. cit.* pp. 374-376.

the reign of Nandivarman Pallavamalla. He does not say what reasons he has for selecting this date. I think nevertheless that this date is a little too early. His predecessor Paramēśvaravarman II is given only 10 years of reign, from 700 down to 710 A.D.[1], the reason for that seeming to be that we know of but one inscription of this king dated the third year of his reign[2]. It is true he was not a great ruler, but this is not a sufficient reason for assigning him so short a reign. This reason may explain the lack of this king's inscriptions. Hence we cannot deny him 15 years of reign at least. This would put the beginning of Nandivarma Pallavamalla's reign in the year 715 A.D.

Now the Udayēndiram plates were obtained by Udayachandra from Pallavamalla after freeing the latter from the fort of Nandipura in the twenty first year of his reign, *i. e.* in the year 736 A. D. According to our explanation Pallavamalla was besieged by Chitramāya and his allies after Chitramāya had been placed on the throne of Kāñchī by Vikramāditya. Granting therefore one full year for all the events that occured between the first attack of Vikramāditya against the Pallava King and the making of the grant at the request of Udayachandra. (*viz.* Kāñchī taken by Vikrama, residence of Vikrama at Kāñchī, instalment of Chitramāya, seige of Nandipura, liberation of Nandivarman), we arrive at the year 735 A. D. as the probable date of Vikrama's invasion. This year perfectly agrees with the chronology of the Chalukyas. Vikramāditya II ascended the throne in 733-4 A. D. It is but natural, being as he was of a war-like nature, that he would at once think of taking revenge of his grandfather's defeat at Peruvaḷanallūr. Thus one or at most two years after, he

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[1] Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
[2] Virattanesvara temple inscription, 56 of 1903.

marched on Kāñchī accompanied by his son Kirtivarman, whom he had appointed heir-apparent shortly before, as recorded in the Kēndūr and in the Vakkalēri Plates. This circumstance also points to the beginning of Vikrama's reign. The year 735 may therefore be safely assigned to Vikramāditya II's expedition against the Pallavas.

PART III

THE BUILDERS OF MAHABALIPURAM

I. INTRODUCTION

Much has been written about Mahābalipuram. The Archaeological Department has published *Reports* and *Memoirs* about those interesting buildings, called "the Seven Pagodas" by the first Europeans who saw them from the sea. Professors and scholars alike, from India and from Europe, have carefully studied those fairy-like constructions, their style, their iconography, their epigraphy, and have published learned treatises containing the results of their research.

I am not going to repeat their statements. The subject of our lecture is not the buildings of Mahābalipuram, but the builders of Mahābalipuram. It is true in the course of our study we also shall speak of those buildings, of their style, of their carvings, of their statues and of their inscriptions; but this will be only in order to know the builders better, to appreciate their artistic ideals, to trace the different influences under which they worked, to realize how far they themselves influenced the aesthetics of South Indian architecture and sculpture.

II. PRE-PALLAVA EXISTENCE OF MAHABALIPURAM

Tirumaṇgai Āḻvār, the famous Vaishnava devotee of the time of Nandivarman Pallavamalla, refers to Mahābalipuram as *Kaḍal-mallai Talaśayanam*, *viz.* the mountain near the sea otherwise called Talaśayanam [1]. This seems to be the real name of the place independently from Narasiṁhavarman Mahāmalla; and this was most likely the name that that sea-shore village had prior to the conquest of Kāñchīpura by the Pallava family. It is but natural that round that rocky hill near the sea-shore the fishermen of the neighbourhood would gather, some Brahmans would establish a shrine, and even some merchants would settle in order to carry on business with other merchants across the seas. Beyond doubt the first builders of Mahābalipuram were pre-Pallava.

The existence of this village continued in the same way, silent and obscure, till the time of the second Pallava invasion of Kāñchī by Siṁhavishṇu. Then a new era of grandeur for the Toṇḍamaṇḍalam fortunately commenced. After the wars with the Chōḷas and other southern princes were ended, the son of Siṁhavishṇu, the great Mahēndravarman I, was to turn towards Mahābalipuram and lay the foundation stone of its grandeur and reputation, as the birth place of South Indian Architecture and Sculpture.

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[1] *Periyatirumoli*, ch. 5.

III. MAHENDRAVARMAN I, THE FIRST PALLAVA BUILDER OF MAHABALIPURAM

There are two schools of thought, that are equally opposed to the statement which is at the head of this section. Some authors, as Mr. Gopalan, adopt the view that the Adhivarāha Temple was possibly excavated by Simhavishṇu the father of Mahēndravarman[1]. Other writers maintain that this temple, and even the whole Mahābalipuram, was originally founded by Narasimhavarman Mahāmalla who named it after his own title. So think Mr. Venkaya[2] and Mr. Longhurst[3].

The whole task to ascertain who was the first Pallava monarch who built a temple at Mahābalipuram turns round the said Adhivarāha Temple. The importance of this question is not to be emphasized. Historically this is perhaps the most interesting construction of Mahābalipuram, not only on account of the two carvings representing two Pallava Kings and their consorts, but also because this cave may afford the first date of those constructions that have made this place so famous.

The two carvings referred to above bear the names of the respective kings they represent:

> "The glorious athirāja (adhirāja) Simhaviṇṇa-Pōttra "(*i. e.* Simhavishṇu-Pōta)"
>
> "The glorious athirāja (adhirāja) Mahendra-Pōttra (*i.e.* Mahēndra Pōta)"[4].

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1 Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 88.
2 *A. S. R.*, 1906-7, p. 234.
3 Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, I, p. 5.
4 Krishna Sastri, *Two Statues of Pallava kings and Five Pallava Inscriptions in a Rock Temple at Mahabalipuram*, p. 3. (*M. of the A. S. I.*, No. 26).

The two kings are therefore Simhavishṇu and Mahēndravarman. In the Pallava genealogy one comes across these two names, as the names of two kings, father and son, who reigned successively. Hence there seems to be no doubt that these carvings represent Simhavishṇu and his son Mahēndravarman I. Yet Mr. H. Krishna Sastri, with the preconceived idea in his mind that the founder of Mahābalipuram is Narasimhavarman Mahāmalla, converts the name Simhavishṇu into Narasimhavarman, and thus states that the two kings represented in the cave are Mahēndravarman I and his son Narasimhavarman I, and that the latter naturally is the builder of the cave[1].

It is interesting to study the process by which the name Simhavishṇu is finally converted into Narasimhavarman, to see how baseless are the statements of some historians when they allow themselves to be led by preconceived ideas. Krishna Sastri says that Narasimhavarman I was also called Narasimhavishṇu, an identification due to Fleet[2], but not substantiated by any epigraphical record. Now Krishna Sastri, having found that Narasimhavishṇu is the same as Narasimhavarman, with no great trouble cuts off the first part of the former name "Nara", and successfully finds out the name Simhavishṇu, which he was looking for. "Narasimhavarman I and II", says he,"—the grandson and the great-grandson respectively of Simhavishṇu—were also known by the name Narasimhavishṇu (or briefly Simhavishṇu)"[3]. And this last conclusion is not confirmed by any authority. In point of fact the Narasimhavarmans were never called Narasimhavishṇus and much less Simhavishṇus.

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1 Krishna Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
2 Fleet, *Kanarese Dynasties*, p. 323, pedigree.
3 Krishna Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

Krishna Sastri's opinion nevertheless has not been accepted by any author. Gopalan, for instance, as mentioned above, thinks that an explanation of the presence of the image of Siṁhavishṇu in the Adhivarāha Temple at Mahābalipuram "may be that the monolith was excavated by him"[1]. Mr. Gopalan does not give any reason why precisely Siṁhavishṇu and not Mahēndravarman was supposed to be the builder of this temple. The reasons that inclined him to make the statement are undoubtedly the same reasons given by Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, when he adopts the same view: "As we know, that Siṁhavishṇu was a Vaishnava, the presence of his representation in the Varāha Cave would be nothing strange...It would be difficult to explain the presence of the relief of Mahēndravarman, as traditionally he was regarded first of all as Jain, later on converted to Śaivism, although this by itself is no insuperable objection to the presence of this panel of his relief in the Vaishnava temple. The appearance of the relief in company with that of his father would perhaps indicate that early in his life, and as a prince who had not developed any pronounced partiality for any of those particular faiths, like Indian sovereigns generally, he visited this place of worship as a matter of course. Hence the conclusion seems justifiable that the reliefs were cut out in the reign of Siṁhavishṇu himself"[2].

The reasoning of the learned Madras scholar does not seem completely conclusive. The existence of a portrait in relief of the father, Siṁhavishṇu, in the Varāha Temple is very easily explained, if we suppose that this temple was built by the son, Mahēndravarman. But one cannot explain so easily

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1 Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

2 S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *The Antiquities of Mahabalipur*, p. 31. (Supl. to the *I. A.)*

the existence of a portrait of the son, if we suppose that the cave was built by the father. Dr. Krishnaswami has obviated this difficulty by supposing that Mahēndravarman is represented "early in his life and as a prince". Yet while examining the relief one fails to discover such signs of early youth in Mahēndravarman's likeness. He is represented as a tall, stout man, of age more or less similar to the age suggested by the portrait of Siṁhavishṇu. Both persons have their heads crowned by the *makuṭa*, which seems to imply royal authority, a circumstance confirmed by the inscriptions, in which both persons are called *adhirāja*. As regards the dress of Mahēndra and his Queens, Krishna Sastri says: "The robe of the King and the *sārīs* of the Queens are quite royal in their appearance"[1]. Moreover the two Queens of Mahēndravarman appear as of the same age as those of Siṁhavishṇu, and as the latter they also wear crowns of the *Kariṇḍa-makuṭa* type. All the details and features of those two groups of figures suggest two kings of mature age, each of them with two of their consorts. If that is so, the carving of the portrait of Mahēndravarman and consequently of the cave could not be done during the reign of Siṁhavishṇu.

Dr. Krishnaswami Aiyangar moreover raises the difficulty of the religious leanings of Mahēndravarman, first towards Jainism and then towards Śaivism, to show that he could not have built a temple to the Varāha *avatār* of Vishṇu. His conversion to the worship of the linga, as a symbol of Śiva, is certainly recorded in the Trichinopoly rock inscription[2]. Yet there is nothing said about him as about Nandivarman Pallavamalla, *viz.* that he never worshipped any other deity[3].

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[1] Krishna Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
[2] *S. I. I.*, I, p. 29.
[3] *S. I. I.*, II, p. 517; *M. E. R.*, 1912, paras 4 and 5.

It is well known how eclectic in religious matters all the Pallava monarchs were, excepting perhaps the said Nandivarman Pallavamalla. To say that he did not build a Vaishnava temple because of his conversion to the Saiva faith, is a statement not sufficiently warranted. As a matter of fact the Vaishnava cave called Mahēndravishṇugṛha, at Mahēndravāḍi, was also built by Mahēndravarman[1].

It may be objected against our statement, that the pillars of this cave are different from the pillars of the other caves built by Mahēndravarman. We readily acknowledge that the style of this Adhivarāha Temple, specially of the pillars, does not fall within the canons of the Mahēndra style. Yet there is no objection in supposing that Mahēndravarman's style was developed during his own reign, especially if one considers that the pillars of this cave though supported by seated lions just as those of Narasiṁhavarman I's time, yet they are not so elaborate and finished as we find in a later period. They have not the full abacus on top of the pillar and under the brackets, as the pillars of the Varāha Maṇḍapa have. The pillars of the Adhivarāha Temple mark the beginning of the transition. On the other hand Mahēndravarman had already seen pillars supported by lions in the Caves of the Kṛishṇa valley. Cave No. 7 of Bhairavakonda has such similar pillars in the verandah of the cave. Two seated lions support the pillars which have no abacus above the capital just as the pillars of the Adhivarāha Temple.

Are there other caves built by Mahēndravarman at Mahābalipuram? It is possible that this is the first time that such question has been formally raised, for it has always been taken for granted that all the caves were carved during

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1 *E. I.*, IV, pp. 152-153. Cf. Longhurst, *op. cit.*, p. 9; Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 91

the reign of Narasiṁhavarman Mahāmalla. Yet there is no document testifying to the authorship of this king over all the caves. Moreover if one is to believe the style of these monuments we shall be bound to assign at least two caves to the reign of Mahēndravarman. They are the so-called Dharmarāja's Maṇḍapa and the Kotikāl Maṇḍapa. As regards the first, Longhurst says: "In style and on plan it is similar to the Mahēndra temple at Mandagapattu, in the South Arcot District. Like the latter it contains three small shrine cells cut in the back wall for images of Brahma, Vishṇu and Śiva" [1]. The same author says the following about the second: "In style, dimensions, and on plan, it bears a strong resemblance to the Mahēndravāḍi temple in the North Arcot District... the only real difference being in the type of door-keepers guarding the entrance into the shrine chamber. In the Mahēndravāḍi temple the door-keepers are two-armed male figures of the usual kind common to the Mahēndra period and face the front. In temple No. 2 (Kotikāl Maṇḍapa), the door-keepers are portrayed as female figures because the shrine was dedicated to Durga. However their pose and dress are similar to those of the usual male figures and the one on the proper right of the entrance is shown holding a club and the other a bow. But both face the front and this is an important point because it indicates that the monument is an early one approximating closely to the Mahēndra period. In the latter Pallava temples we only get side views of the doorkeepers as they are then depicted facing the entrance into the shrine chamber... The ceiling is supported by two rock-cut pillars in the typical Mahēndra style. The floor of the little shrine cell is raised 2 feet above the level of the hall and is approached by steps, the first one being

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[1] Longhurst, *op. cit.*, II, p. 10 *(M. of A. S. I.*, No. 33).

Undavalli Cave.

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half-moon-shaped as in the Mahēndravāḍi temple. In fact the style, plan and dimensions of these two temples are so remarkably alike that one is inclined to think that they must have been excavated by the same workmen, as they both appear to belong to about the same early period"[1].

In spite of this, Mr. Longhurst classifies both caves among those carved in the reign of Narasiṁhavarman I. Perhaps he is led to this conclusion by the short inscription found in the Dharmarāja's Maṇḍapa, *viz. Atyantakāma Pallavēśvaragṛha* that is "the temple of the Pallava Lord Atyantakāma", and by the broad interpretation of Dr. Hultzsch who thinks that Narasiṁhavarman I might also have had the title "Atyantakāma"[2]. In reality this title is not found among the titles of the Mahāmalla, but only among the titles of his son Paramēśvaravarman I[3]. Moreover the fact that the name or title of a king is engraved on the walls or pillars of one of these constructions may only mean that the said king is either contemporary or posterior to the building of the cave. It does not precisely mean that the said king built it. Thus on the Dharmarāja's *Ratha*, which undoubtedly belongs to the reign of Narasiṁhavarman Mahāmalla, there are two names: "Narasiṁha" and "Atyantakāma", the latter in floried style totally different from the style of the first[4]. This means that Ayantakāma, *i. e.* Paramēśvaravarman I, ordered his own titles to be engraved on the *ratha* built by his father.

Therefore there is no reason at all why the two above mentioned caves, the Dharmarāja's Maṇḍapa and the Kotikāl

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1 *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
3 Cf. Heras, *The Pallava Genealogy*, Chart No. 3.
4 Cf. *E. I.*, X, p. 2.

Maṇḍapa, should not be assigned to Mahēndravarman's reign. Hence we must place them in that long list of caves carved by him all over his kingdom from Pallavaram down to the Pudukkottai State, the style of which they resemble so closely. In point of fact it would have been strange that this king should have selected different boulders and rocky hills all over Tamil-nāḍu to carve cave temples in them, and would not have used the rocky hill and boulders of Kadalmallai, in the neighbourhood of his own capital, for the same religious purpose[1].

In connection with all these rock excavations of Mahēndravarman, a new interesting question arose a few years ago, which deserves our attention. Prof. Jouveau-Dubreuil, of the Pondichery College, proposed this question as follows: "The Pallavas at the end of the VI century reigned in the Districts of Nellore and Guntūr; their neighbours were the Vishṇukuṇḍins who reigned on the banks of the Kṛishṇa; Siṁhavishṇu married probably the daughter of a Vishṇukuṇḍin king, named Vikramahēndra, and gave his son the name of his grandfather, Mahēndravikrama.

"We know that Vikramēndravarman I was the son of a Vākāṭaka princess; and the inscriptions of the Vākāṭaka kings are found engraved in the caves of Ajanta. It is probable that it was owing to their Vākāṭaka origin that the Vishṇukuṇḍins had the idea of digging caves on the banks of the Kṛishṇa — caves that we see even now at Bezwada, Mogulrazapuram, Undavalli and Sittanagaram. The Pallava king Mahēndravarman I, who was the grandson of a Vishṇukuṇḍin king, having had many occasions to admire those

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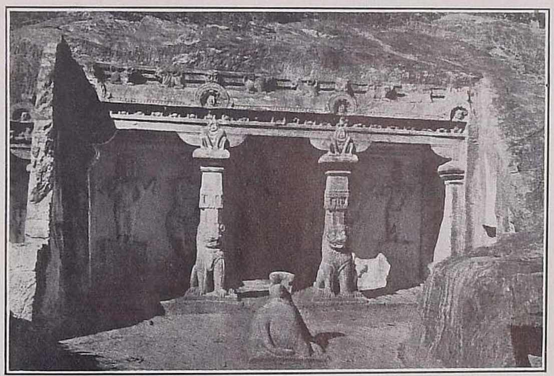
1 For the characteristic features of the Mahendra style, see Longhurst, *op. cit*, I, p. 2; Gopalan, *op. cit*, p. 91-92.



Bhairavakonda. Cave No. VII.

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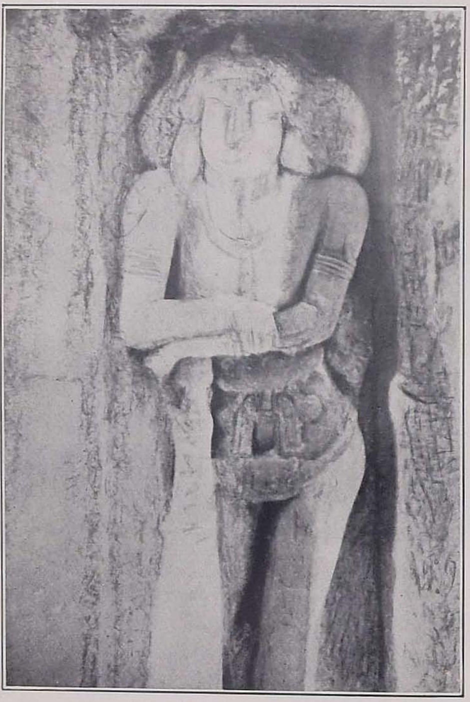

Bhairavakonda. Cave No. III, Dvarapalaka.

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caves that had been dug by his relatives, had similar ones cut on the rock around Kāñchīpuram"[1].

Mr. Gopalan and his editor Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar are not ready to admit this last conclusion of the French scholar, for the simple reason that the marriage with the Vishṇukuṇḍin princess seems to be "far too fanciful to build such a theory on"[2]. It is true that in Jouveau-Dubreuil's explanation of the origin of the Pallava caves, there are some fanciful statements; but it is also true that there are incontrovertible facts. The connection between the caves of Ajanta with the caves of the Kṛishṇa valley, the carving of the latter caves by the Vishṇukuṇḍins and the marriage between Siṁhavishṇu and the Vishṇukuṇḍin princess must be counted among the first. Yet nobody may refuse to accept that Siṁhavishṇu and his ancestors, and also Mahēndravarman when young, were inhabiting Āndhradēśa, and that on many occasions they must have seen the caves of the Kṛishṇa valley. The fact that the first caves built by Mahēndravarman in Tamil-nāḍu are so similar to those in the Telugu country may prove that this King took a fancy to the latter caves and intended to imitate them in his own kingdom.

Yet Mr. Longhurst is not easily led to accept this conclusion, and maintains on purely architectural grounds, that the Bezwada Cave temples are Pallava monuments of "the

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[1] Jouveau-Dubreuil, *The Pallavas*, p. 35.

[2] Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 77, n. 2. "There is no clear evidence that the style of Mahendravarman cave temples were borrowed from Vishnukundin examples on the banks of the Krishna". So says Mr. Gopalan, on p. 78 of his work, but on p. 161 he readily admits what he denied before: "The first specimens were all of them excavations of hill sides into temples such as those at Trichinopoly, Vallam and Mamandur, modelled after the caves of Undavalli".

early part of the seventh century"[1]. Again later on he remarks: "The origin of these temples (Bezwada caves) is obscure and there is no actual proof that they are the work of the Pallavas, but their architectural style seems to denote they were excavated by the latter and that they represent their earliest attempts in this direction before the Pallavas were driven south by the Chalukyas *(sic)* and executed similar but better works in the Tamil country"[2].

It is therefore evident that according to Mr. Longhurst the Telugu Caves were also carved by order of Mahēndravarman or perhaps by some of his ancestors, father or grandfather. Against this opinion stands the inscription discovered by Prof. Jouveau-Dubreuil in the Mandagapattu Cave:

> "This is the temple caused to be constructed by the (King) Vichitrachitta (a title of Mahēndravarman) for Brahma, Īśvara and Vishṇu, without bricks, without timber, without metals and without mortar"[3].

The naïve exultation of Mehēndravarman I when he saw his first rock-cut cave-temple finished, goes on even through the English translation of his inscription. It is the joy of a child who has seen a structure of sand in a play ground and who on reaching home succeeds with himself in making one similar to the model: "I have also made one myself", he cries exultantly. Had Mahēndra excavated the caves of the Telugu country, or had his father or grandfather carved them, he would not have been able to write the preceding inscription. The Mandagapattu cave is undoubtedly the first cave carved

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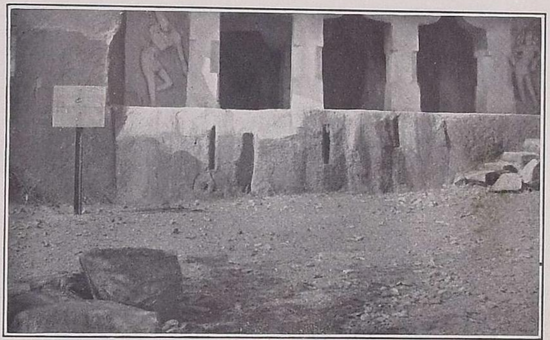
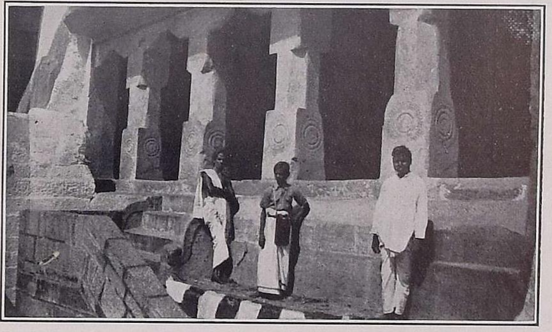
[1] Longhurst, *op. cit.*, I, p. 5.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[3] Jouveau Dubreuil, *Congeevaram Inscription of Mahendravarman, I*, p. II.



Mandagapattu Cave.



Trichinopoly Cave.

Ḍalavānūṟ Cave built by Mahēndravarman I.

by Mahēndravarman, and incidentally the first cave temple ever carved in the Tamil-nāḍu, after the specimens seen in the valley of the Kṛishṇa.

This leads us to speak of a side aspect of Mahēndravarman I, one of the greatest among the great Pallava Monarchs. Before his time the temples were built with bricks, timber, metal and mortar. Such are the elements mentioned in the preceding inscription, and Mahēndra boasts of not having been in need of either of them for building his temple. We know of two earlier gifts made to temples by members of the Pallava family. One is a grant made by king Skandaśishya, probably the father of Kumāravishnu = Vijaya-Skandavarman, to "the God of the holy Mulasthāna (temple) at Tirukkalukkunram"[1] after the conquest of Kāñchīpura by his son. The other is a grant made by princess Chārudēvi, the daughter-in-law of the said Kumāravishṇu = Vijaya-Skandavarman, "to the god Nārayāṇa of the Kuli-Mahātaraka temple at Dalura"[1]. These temples were built with mortar and bricks and roofed with timber, and consequently have all perished. The art of

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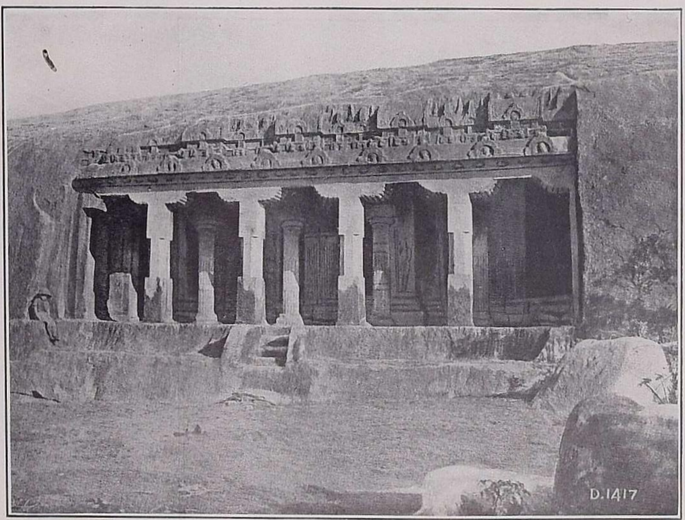
[1] Tirukkalukkunram Inscription of Rajakesarivarman, *E. I.*, III, p. 279. Mr. V. Venkayya, while editing this inscription, identifies this King Skandasishya "with Skandavarman, a name which occurs repeatedly in the genealogy of an early branch of the Pallavas, whose grants are dated from Pallakkada, Dasanapura and Kanchipura". Ibid., p. 277. None of these kings could have made this grant since all of them were reigning in the Telugu country, the country round Kanchipura, and therefore Tirukkalukkunram, being under the sway of the Cholas. The only king Skandasishya mentioned in the Pallava pedigree is the father of Kumaravishnu = Vijaya-Skandavarman, who could have made this grant when arriving at Kanchipura after the conquest of this city by his son. Cf. Heras, *op. cit.*, Charter No. 1.

stone building was still unknown in the Tamil-nāḍu. Mahēndravarman by commencing building rock-cut temples may be rightly considered to be the founder of the new system of stone buildings, that has produced such wonderful specimens in the course of centuries. The history of Hindu Architecture in the Tamil country begins with Mahēndravarman I.



Mahābalipuram. Cave No. 3:

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Mahābalipuram. Varāha Maṇḍapa.

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IV. NARASIMHAVARMAN MAHAMALLA THE SECOND BUILDER OF MAHABALIPURAM

The first impulse to rock-cut buildings in the Tamil-nāḍu was given by Mahēndravarman I. His son Narasiṁha-varman Mahāmalla had to follow his example. Moreover Mahēndravarman had showed him how to develop the first models of his caves in his own attempt at the western side of the Mahābalipuram hill, in what is now called the Adhi-varāha Temple. By doing so and by carving the two maṇ-ḍapas mentioned above in the same hill, the great Mahēndra had finally pointed out to Mahāmalla a most beautiful spot where numerous excavations might convert that rock into a sanctuary of Hinduism. Narasiṁhavarman Mahāmalla ful-filled the wishes of his father beyond expectation. A sudden event gave him a chance to appreciate the beauty of some new models in cave-temple buildings and to transfer those new models to his own country, improving thus on the work of his father.

Soon after his accession to the throne Narasiṁhavarman was unexpectedly attacked by Pulikēśi II, the enemy of his father. The Pallava king was so successful that he not only defeated his assailant, but pursued him to his capital and with his victorious army sacked it. When the Mahāmalla entered the capital of his enemies, Vātāpi possessed highly artistic cave-temples executed extraordinarily well. Cave No. 3, the largest and most ornamented of all the Bādāmi caves, had been finished during the reign of Mangalēśa, the

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[1] *E. I.*, VIII, p. 146.

uncle of Pulikēśi II, in Śaka 500, that corresponds to 578 A. D. [1]. The archaeologists agree that caves No. 2 and No. 4 also belong to the same period. Cave No. 1 appears to be the oldest of all the Bādāmi Caves [2]. Nothing may be said of cave No. 5, on account of its lack of ornamentation, though this feature seems also to suggest an early age. In any case it is certain that the four great caves of Bādāmi were already finished when the Pallava King took possession of the Chalukya capital.

Narasiṁhavarman I, who was decidedly proud of the architectural achievements of his father, was undoubtedly struck with admiration at the beauty in the architectural concept and the perfection of its execution in those elaborate cave-temples which are still the admiration of architects, sculptors and art critics. One does not know whether he engaged *sūtradhāris* of the Kanarese country to build similar temples in his own kingdom, as Vikramāditya II did when he conquered Kāñchī one hundred years after; but this is certainly beyond doubt, that the Pallava king studied the Chalukya style of cave building, took designs of some of the architectural elements and motifs of ornamentation, broadened his own views as regards stone carving and fostered in his mind new ambitious projects to emulate the artistic achievements of his enemies. And he succeeded.

Let me note *en passant* that it is most pleasantly interesting to detect the double current of mutual influence flowing over the architectural style of these two hostile nations. During the first half of the seventh century the Kanarese religious style influences the Pallava style, which is the pioneer architectural style in the Tamil-nāḍu. One hundred

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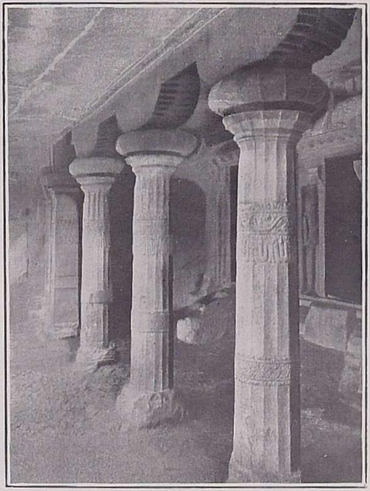
1 *I. A.*, III, p. 305-306; pp. 263-264; X, p. 58-60.
2 Banerji, *Basreliefs of Badami*, p. 2 (*M. of A. S. I.*, No. 25).

Bādāmi. Cave No. 1, Pillars in Verandah.



Mahābalipuram. Cave No. 3, Pillars of the back row.

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years after the religious architecture in the Pallava kingdom will be so much advanced that it will similarly influence the architecture of Karṇāṭaka, as we mentioned in the lecture of yesterday.

The architectural works of Narasiṁhavarman I at Mahābalipuram are of three differents kinds:

1. Cave temples.
2. *Rathas*.
3. Rock sculptures.

We shall study each group separately.

1. *Cave temples.*

Besides several unfinished caves (for instance No. 17) four completely finished cave-temples may be assigned to his reign, *viz*.

No. 3,
Trimurti Temple,
Varāha Maṇḍapa,
Mahiśasura Maṇḍapa.

The first difference we notice as regards the Mahāmalla style in comparison with the style of his father is the facade of the cave. It is not plain, little dormer windows with finials of a Buddhist pattern, very frequent at Undavalli and Bhairavakonda, run all along the cornice of the cave giving the facade an appearance of a real temple. These decorations mount higher where the sloping of the boulder allows it; this occurs in the case of the Trimurti Temple. Besides in this latter case the illusion of being a temple is increased by the daring construction of the projecting central part, which seems to come forward from the facade to invite the passers by to enter the excavation.

A new feature in the caves of the Mahāmalla are the pillars. His pillars ascend much higher and appear more slender than those set up by his father. Even when the design is the same as the design of the pillars of Mahēndra, where an octogonal column intercepts the rectangular form of the pillar—as is the case of the foremost pillars of cave No. 3 — Narasiṁha's pillars look totally different. That massiveness of Mahēndra's pillars, with the impression it produces that the builder had great misgivings of the huge weight of the ceiling, has dwindled away to nothing. Other kinds of pillars are also found in Mahāmalla's caves. The most common are the round pillars supported upon a seated lion (that takes different zoological forms, according to the whim of the sculptors), and a prismatical pillar adorned with two zones of delicate filigree. The first class of pillars are an imitation and at times a development of the lion pillars carved for the first time by Mahēndravarman in the Adhi-varāha Temple. The second class of pillars, found in No. 3 and in the Varāha Maṇḍapa, is copied from the pillars in the verandah of Cave No. 1 of Bādāmi. The same prismatic appearance, the same bulbous lotus-like development of the capital, the same interruption of the fluting by a band of filigree work (though the Mahābalipuram band is improved in design, if not in execution), the same rosary-like garlands as a motif of decoration, motif that appears for the first time at Bādāmi, passes then to Mahābalipuram and then to all the styles of Southern India. Moreover the pillars of Narasiṁha-varman I have already, at least sometimes, a large abacus over the capital (which was missing in the pillars of the Va-rāha Temple of Mahēndravarman). This abacus may be seen on the pillars of the Mahiśasura Maṇḍapa and of the Varāha Maṇḍapa. On the abacus there is a double bracket to support the beam. The arrangement of abacus and brackets, which

Bādāmi. Cave No. 2,
Trivikrama.

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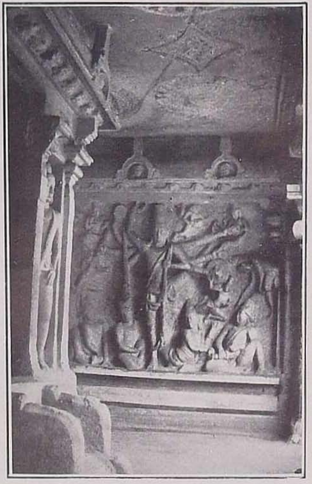

Mahābalipuram. Varāha Maṇḍapa,
Trivikrama.

Bādāmi. Cave No. 2, Varāhavatār.

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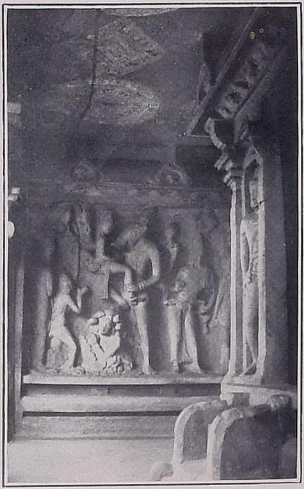

Mahābalipuram. Varāha Maṇḍapa, Varāhavātār.

is seen for the first time at Mahābalipuram, has afterwards become a distinctive feature of Chōḷa architecture.

Another new feature introduced by the Mahāmalla in his caves are the large sculptural panels, which not only decorate the walls but cover them totally after the Bādāmi fashion. The carved subjects themselves, or some of them at least, seem to be copied from the subjects of the Bādāmi Caves. Twice the two well known *avatārs* of Vishṇu, Varāha and Vāman, are represented in Cave No. 2 and Cave No. 3. At Māhabalipuram they are found also together in the Varāha Maṇḍapa. Gaja-Lakshmi is also represented in both places, in Cave No. 2 at Bādāmi and in the same Varāha Maṇḍapa at Mahābalipuram. Durga is also found in both places, though the one found in the Varāha Maṇḍapa is not reproduced after the model of Cave No. 1 at Bādāmi.

Much more remarkable are the two panels that cover the side walls of the Mahiśasura Maṇḍapa. One of them represents the Anantasayana, not in the conventional way of later times, but in a more simple and impressive manner. This representation is not found in the Bādāmi Caves. Its original model is found in the Undavalli Cave-temple in the valley of the Kṛishṇa[1]. The same representation of the scene, the same grouping of figures, with slight difference of conception and execution. An opposite panel in the same maṇḍapa represents the scene that has given the modern name to the excavation. The fight of Durga against Mahiśasura. This panel is purely original, as far as I know. The sculptor had no model from which to copy, and what is more, the panel has never to my recollection been copied elsewhere. It represents the goddess not tramping over the dead buffalo and actually killing the *asura* that springs

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[1] Longhurst, *op. cit.*, I, pl. XII.

forth from its neck, but she is riding on her *vāhana*, the lion, and actually shooting arrows and aiming at the *asura*, who is represented as a colossal giant with buffalo's head. The beauty of this new representation of the Mahiśasuramardhini is increased by the numerous figures that have been put round the two main ones. The fight of the *dēvi* and the *asura* was not a subject grand enough for the creative power of that unknown genius; he happily introduced two armies, the army of Durga and the army of the Mahiśa, the result being the creation of a new scene, the most impressive carving of Mahābalipuram. The Mahiśasuramardhini of the Mahiśasura Maṇḍapa is a painting in stone.

In general the statues and sculptures of Mahābalipuram are more plain than those of Bādāmi. There is no profusion of ornamentation nor richness of details. But the naturalness and freshness of the poses of the figures of Mahābalipuram cannot be found in the more conventional panels of Bādāmi. The expression of hatred is easily detected in the faces of those two giants as they stand at the foot of the sleeping Vishṇu in the scene of the Anantasayana; as also is their intention to strike with the club easily perceived in the masterly position of their mighty legs. The natural relaxation of the right arm of Vishṇu, in the same scene, cannot be found but in a sleeping person. The pose of the Mahiśāsura on the opposite panel is also most remarkable. By bending one of his knees he is actually gathering strength to throw his club over the litle goddess, who is advancing, almost flying, against him.

2. *Rathas.*

The success obtained by Narasiṁhavarman in the development of the caves of his father encouraged him to attempt a new creation. The carving in stone of a real temple with-

Undavalli Cave, Guntur District. Anantasayana.

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Mahābalipuram. Mahiṡasura Maṇḍapa, Anantasayana.

Mahābalipuram. Mahiśasura Maṇḍapa, Mahiśasura Panel.

out using mortar or bricks or wood; not a building erected with hewn stone, but carved out of the living rock. The result of this new attempt are the so-called *rathas*.

The *rathas* of Mahābalipuram are eight but those that create most interest are the five situated to the south of the rocky hill. They are from south to north called as follows:

Dharmarāja's *Ratha*
Bhima's *Ratha*
Arjuna's *Ratha*
Draupadi's *Ratha*
Sahadēva's *Ratha*

The name *ratha* (charriot) is inappropriate; it was given to those constructions by the villagers in relatively modern times. Narasiṁha, whose name is read on the walls of the Dharmarāja's *Ratha*, did not pretend to build any *ratha*, but real *gṛhas*, shrines, temples; and we are really fortunate that the five *rathas* are totally different from one another. They represent just so many types of south Indian brick and wooden temples of those early days, which otherwise would be unknown to us.

The Dharmarāja's *Ratha*, dedicated to Śiva, has a three-storeyed *vimāṇa*, which is the model of the Kailāsanātha temple of Congeevaram, and which in turn influenced the later Chalukya temples in the north and the Chōḷa temples in the south. The most striking development of the *vimāṇa* of this *ratha* is the colosal *vimāṇa* of the Brihadīśvaraswāmi temple of Tanjore.

Bhima's *Ratha* with its dormer windows and its wagon-roofs, similar to the Sañchi ones, both elements used as decorative motifs, is an example of how much Buddhism influenced early Hindu architecture. The Thousand Pillars Maṇḍapa within the enclosure of the great Naṭarāja temple at Chidambaram is a much later reproduction of this hall, which was never finished.

Arjuna's *Ratha* was also dedicated to Śiva and is similar to Dharmarāja's *Ratha*.

Draupadi's *Ratha* is the most interesting and original of all the *rathas*. There is not to my knowledge any other building resembling it in Southern India. The panel representing Durga is a masterpiece of Pallava art.

Shahadēva's *Ratha* is a model of a temple reproducing an ancient Buddhist *chaitya*. There is a temple of the same shape, but much larger at Aihole, the Durga temple. According to an inscription on the same temple it seems to have been built by Vikramāditya II[1]. Since he was pleased with the Pallava buildings, one even may suspect if the Aihole temple was not influenced by this *Ratha* at Mahābalipuram, which was undoubtedly visited by the great Emperor. In the Tamil country this apsidal shape of the temple was reproduced in a few temples at a little later period. The Vadamallīśvara temple at Oragadum, one of the Jaina temples at Tiruparuttikkunram and the Paraśuramēśvara temple at Gudimallam, belong to the later Pallava period. At the same time the Virattānēśvara temple, at Tiruttani, was being built after the ordinary quadrilateral design. Yet the *vimāṇa* over the *garbagṛha* was built in this peculiar *chaitya* fashion. Later on the apsidal shape disappears completely from southern religious architecture.

While speaking of these *rathas*, we must refer to some sculptures of animals undoubtedly belonging to the same period; they are representations of a Nandi, a lion, and an elephant, the respective *vāhanas* of Śiva, Durga and Indra, and are placed next to the *rathas* devoted to these gods.

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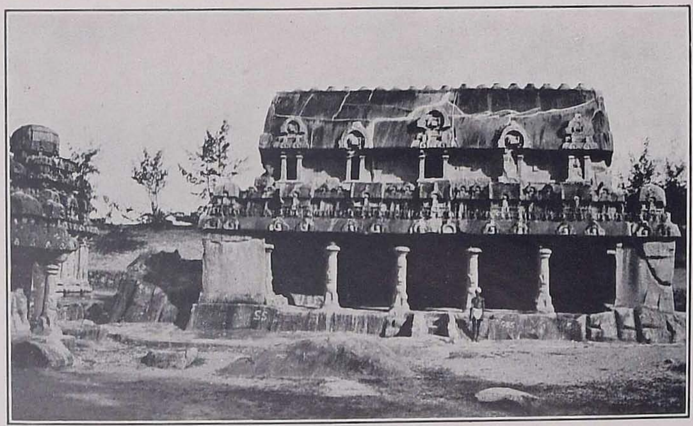
[1] *I. A.*, VIII, p. 286.

Mahābalipuram. Draupadi's Ratha, Arjuna's Ratha, Bhima's Ratha and Dharmarāja's Ratha.



Mahābalipuram. Bhima's Ratha.

3. *Rock Sculptures.*

The magnificent large panels produced by Narasiṁha's sculptors in the Mahīśasura Maṇḍapa, justified a new and greater endeavour. The production of such panels in a much larger scale and up on the very face of the massive living stone. One of these panels in its representation is completely finished, *viz.* the lifting up of Mount Govardhana; the other two are incomplete though one of them may also be considered as practically an entirety, since only a corner of it is left in a rough state. The scene depicted is the so-called Arjuna's penance. The third and last seems to have been intended to represent the same scene as the second.

The effect produced by these extraordinarily large carvings is simply marvellous. In the scene of the lifting of Govardhana, all the persons—and they are many—are represented in life size. Only Kṛishṇa and another male figure next to him—said to be Balarāma—are shown in a gigantic, god-like appearance. In the midst of this grandeur, the artist did not lose sight of depicting some real scenes of pastoral life; these are placed under the mountain as it is lifted up by the hero. For instance, the cowherd milking a cow while the dam is licking its little calf—a picture seen by us thousands of times; but nevertheless it is so naturally and attractively represented that one almost forgets to look at the main figure of the carving, that is Kṛishṇa.

As regards the so-called Arjuna's penance, much has been written. Some contend that the subject of the carving is not the penance of that *Mahābhārata* hero. Others eagerly supporting the traditional interpretation pretend to see there the scene of Arjuna's penance, in order to obtain the *paśupata* from god Śiva. Here is not the place to enter into a controversy about this matter. We shall not delay on what seems beyond doubt, that the central crevice between the two

boulders is intended to represent a river, where *nāgas* have been carved. It is not less certain that on the top of these rocks there was a reservoir of water, remains of which are still to be seen, and that in front of the sculpture there was a kind of a lake which is still now in a shadowy existence. Thus by this overflowing stream of water the whole picture was ingeneously converted into a living scene of the Himālayas. Two *nāgas* are joyfully playing with the water in the middle of the stream; here a Brahman goes back home with a large pot of water on one of his shoulders; there a deer is approaching the stream to appease its thirst. Above two swans are in pose to plunge into the water; below numerous ascetics are performing their penances round a small shrine of Vishṇu. On the other side of the river a cat, wishing to imitate those ascetics, takes up the same posture of penance by lifting its whole body on its hind legs and raising its front paws above his head. In the meantime the little mice of the forest, on seeing their enemy in such an ecstatic, harmless posture, run about fearlessly here and there and even seem daring enough to worship him as their god. The same scene is beautifully depicted in the *Mahābhārata* as having taken place on the banks of the Ganges[1]. We cannot deny that the unknown artist who so transformed that bulk of stone, besides being a wonderful master in depicting the natural scenes of the forest, and the neighbouring haunts of the river—probably the Ganges—had also a keen sense of humour.

4. *Other works.*

Mr. Gopalan affirms that Narasiṁhavarman Mahāmalla

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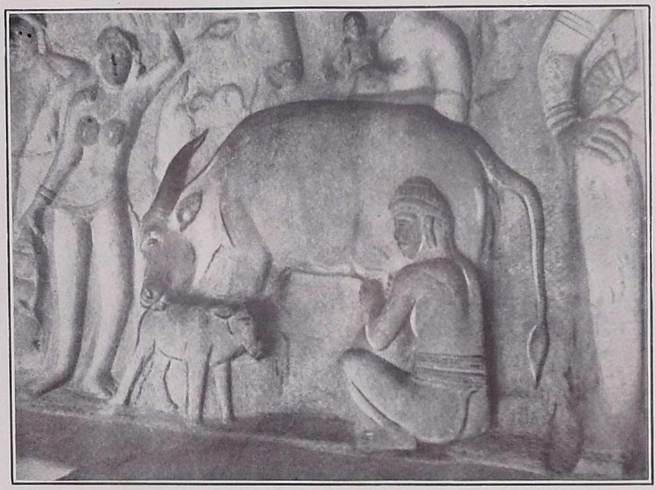
[1] *Mahabharata*, Udyoga Parva, Ch. 100, stanzas 16 ff. (Bombay 1920).



Mahābalipuram. Kṛishṇa Maṇḍapa, Cowherd and Cow.

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had built no temples but at Mahābalipuram[1]; while Mr. Longhurst states that all the buildings apparently in his style at Mahābalipuram are not necessarily built by him, but may have been built by some of his successors[2]. Accordingly some of the buildings described by Mr. Longhurst as buildings of the Mahāmalla will be classified by us as buildings of another Pallava monarch.

Yet there is no doubt that Narasiṁhavarman not only beautified the old village of Talaśayanam by erecting the buildings described above and by carving scenes of Hindu mythology on its rocky mounds and hill sides; but he further improved the community by constructing new portions of the village in order to convert it into a town. The fortifications of the citadel on the top of the hill, undoubtedly were built by him. They have now disappeared, but the foundations are still traceable on the rock. We may also reasonably suspect that Narasiṁha created a naval basis there for purposes of extending the commerce of his kingdom to Ceylon and to other distant countries and for fostering emigration to the islands of the East from among his over-populated country[3]. The *Mahāvaṁśa* speaks of the fleet of Narasiṁha sailing from an unnamed harbour when he sent his friend Māṇavanna to Ceylon with a contingent of his army[4]. We know of no other harbour but Mahābalipuram in the neighbourhood of the Pallava capital. These two places are 75 miles distant only. Tirumaṇgai Āḻvār describes the busy harbour of Mahābalipuram in the following stanza:

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1 Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
2 Longhurst, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 11-12.
3 Cf. Vogel, *The Relation between the Art of India and Java, The Influences of Indian Art*, p. 51.
4 *Mahavamsa*, p. 36.

"Oh, foolish soul, come round the strong-minded one enshrined at Kadalmallai Talaśayanam, which looks prosperous with the number of ships laden with gems, that bear riches, elephants and other wealth"[1].

All these works fully justified the name of Mamallapuram or Mahāmallapuram, which beyond doubt he himself gave to the newly aggrandized town, and which has lately been corrupted into Mahābalipuram.

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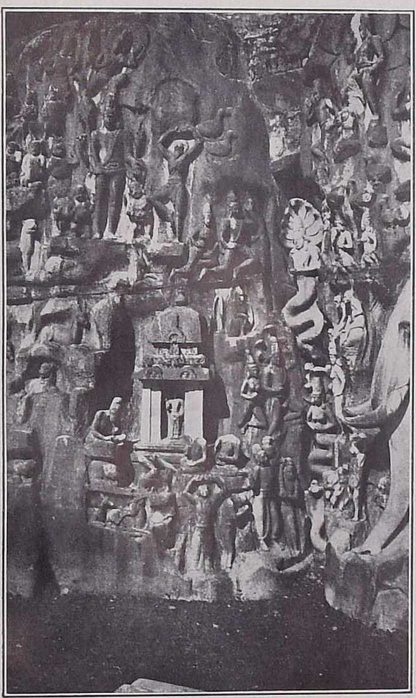
[1] *Periyatirumoli*, VI, 2, stanza 6.



Mahābalipuram. Arjuna's Penance, the river Ganges, Śiva, Arjuna and rishis.

Brahman carrying a water pot.

Cat doing penance and mice worshipping him.

Mahābalipuram, Arjuna's Penance.

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V. PARAMESVARAVARMAN I THE THIRD BUILDER OF MAHABALIPURAM

Paramēśvaravarman I, son and second successor of Narasiṁhavarman Mahāmalla, continued the work of his father in embellishing Mahābalipuram. Two buildings must be attributed to him, *viz.*

Ganēśa's *Ratha*
Ramanuja's Maṇḍapa.

These two constructions were generally attributed to the Mahāmalla in former days. As a matter of fact the style of both is the same style of Narasiṁhavarman, and the title "Atyantakāma" which is read engraved on the walls of both the cave and the *ratha*, was supposed to be a title of Narasiṁhavarman. Now nevertheless it is well proved that the title "Atyantakāma" was only possessed by Paramēśvaravarman I. The only other building exhibiting this title is, as we have seen, the Dharmarāja's *ratha*, and I am inclined to believe that the title is there on the plea that, though commenced by Narasiṁhavarman, this *ratha* was perhaps finished by Paramēśvaravarman.

Ganēśa's *ratha* is similar in style to Arjuna's *ratha*, but the entrance is wider and has a small porch in front. An ugly modern statue of Ganēśa is being worshipped there by the villagers.

VI. NARASIMHAVARMAN II RAJASIMHA THE FOURTH BUILDER OF MAHABALIPURAM

A new era for south Indian architecture commenced when Narasiṁhavarman II Rājasiṁha ascended the throne of Kāñchī. He is said, in the Kaśākudi plates of Nandivarman Pallavamalla, to have "bestowed his wealth in temples and Brāhmaṇas"[1]; and while doing so, he created a new departure in architecture, which marked the final step towards the modern stone structure of temples.

The idea of his grandfather of carving out of a rocky mass temples which before were built of brick, mortar and timber, was abandoned by Rājasiṁha. He would substitute bricks and timber for the hewn stone and would produce magnificent temples raised in handicraft, the first attempt of this kind in the Tamil-nāḍu.

The first essay seems to have been made at Mahābalipuram by building the Sea-shore Temple. For some time the archaeologists thought that this building was erected by the Chōḷas, as some inscriptions in Chōḷa Grantha are found within the precincts of the temple. Yet the name of Rājasiṁha has now been found in Grantha Pallava characters, so that not a doubt remains about its Pallava origin at present. Properly speaking there are two temples, one facing east and the other facing west, both however dedicated to Śiva. The general style of the temple is the same as the style of the Dharmarāja's *ratha*. Yet the *vimāṇas* here found are much higher and more elegant. The base of the *vimāṇa* of the larger

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[1] *S. I. I.*, II, p. 357.

Mahābalipuram. Sea-shore Temple.

Congeevaram. Kailāsanātha Temple.

temple, which is the one facing east, is somewhat smaller than the base of the *vimāṇa* of the *ratha*. Besides, this *vimāṇa* has six storeys instead of three. The interior of both the temples is not so complex as is the case in later temples, especially so in most temples of the Hoysaḷa type; these temples have one chamber only, the *garbagṛha*. A second instance of this kind of temple was built by Rājasiṁha in his own capital Kāñchī —the Kailāsanātha temple, of larger dimensions with a more majestic *vimāṇa*. Several new features were introduced here, which afterwards passed on to many South Indian temples:

1st. A *mukha maṇḍapa*.
2nd. A *navaraṅga*, as large as the *garbagṛha* itself.
3rd. A *pradakshiṇa* around the *garbagṛha*.
4th. Nine small shrines around the *garbagṛha*. Seven have independent entrances from outside; and two, a little larger than the others, have doors leading to the *navaraṇga* constructed in later times between the temple itself and the *mukha maṇḍapa*.

A further development of this style is offered by the Vaikuntha Perumāḷ temple at Congeevaram that has two *pradakshiṇas*.

Another small temple at Mahābalipuram, also built by Rājasiṁha, offers a new architectural specimen in temple-building. I refer to the so-called Mukunda Nayanar temple, about one mile north of the village along the sea shore. This temple was never intended to be a large building. It is as small as the smallest *ratha*. In fact one would classify it as a *ratha* but for the lines of its construction. Arjuna's *ratha* seems to have been the model. Longhurst remarks that the two pillars of the verandah suggest foreign influence[1]. One does not

[1] Longhurst, *op. cit.*, III, p. 7 (*M. of the A. S. I.* No., 40).

see what foreign influence is discovered in those plain round pillars, which afterwards became so common in Chōḷa architecture. This is the first time they appear in South Indian temples.

There is still a third temple which also belongs to this period. The Olakkanēśvara temple, sometimes also called the Iśvara temple, on the top of the hill of the Varāha Maṇḍapa. Unfortunately the whole temple had been ruined, and though it has since been reconstructed by the Archaeological Department, one cannot conjecture as to the original feature of the standing structure.

We must finally mention two constructions, about the origin of which there is a great divergence of opinions. The Tiger Cave, and the Atiranachanda's Maṇḍapa, located in a little hamlet called Salavankuppam, three miles north of Mahābalipuram. It seems to have been a suburb of old Mahābalipuram when in its palmy days.

The Atiranachanda's Maṇḍapa is a cave in the style of Mahēndravarman I, though of larger proportions. It is dedicated to Śiva. The Tiger's Cave is a queer unique construction; it is scooped out of a huge boulder on the sea-shore, is small and square, and set around it, as if forming the frame of its entrance, are nine huge heads of open-mouthed tigers or lions of the conventional type[1]. The cave is now empty. Perhaps it was originally destined to receive an image, like that of Durga for instance. Two other excavations of small moment, that are on a huge rock near-by, seem to be of the same period. Both Cave and Maṇḍapa, are but a few steps distant of each other, this being the reason why both

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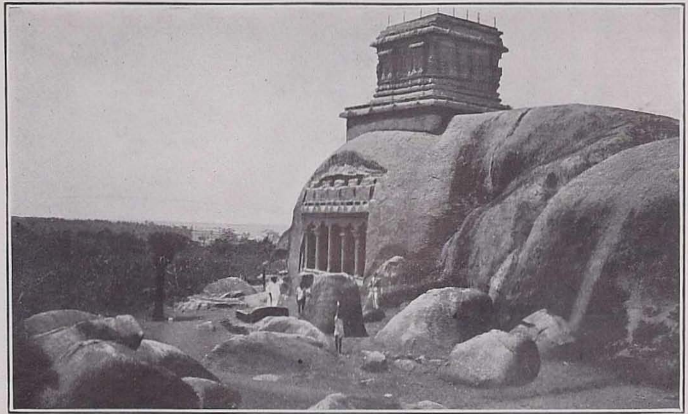
[1] At Cuttack, Orissa, there is also a Tiger Cave, but there one tiger head only is represented. The open mouth of the beast forms the entrance to the Cave. Cf. Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, p. 143 (London, 1876).



Mahābalipuram. Olakkanēśvara Temple and Mahiśasura Maṇḍapa.

Mahābalipuram. Mukunda Nayanar Temple.

constructions are attributed to the same king, for the cave has no inscription at all.

As regards the Maṇḍapa, two inscriptions have been found in it, both mentioning king Atiranachanda. Hultzsch, who has read the inscriptions, would be inclined to assign the construction of these two monuments to Nandivarman Pallavamalla on paleographical grounds. He says that the alphabet of these inscriptions "resembles, though it is not quite identical with it, the alphabet of the Kaśākudi plates of Nandivarman... As the alphabet of stone inscriptions sometimes differs slightly from that of contemporaneous records on copper, there would be no objection to assigning these records... to the time of Nandivarman, the contemporary of the Western Chalukya King Vikramāditya"[1]. Yet the title Atiranachanda was never used by Pallavamalla, but only by Narasiṁhavarman II. Moreover Nandivarman Pallavamalla and his successors of the branch of Bhimavarman seem not to have taken any interest in this sea-shore town. The period of glory of Mahābalipuram had passed away by that time with the branch of Siṁhaviṣṇu.

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[1] *E. I.*, X, p. 3.

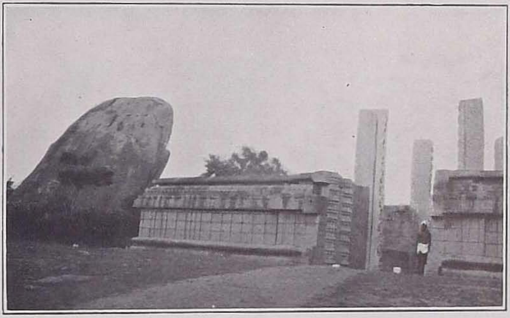
VII. OTHER MINOR BUILDERS

Yet there are still at Mahābalipuram several buildings erected at a much later period, probably during the third Vijayanagara Dynasty (1409-1542) or the beginning of the fourth. These buildings are:

1. Sthalasayana-Perumāḷ Temple
2. Unfinished Monumental Gateway
3. Temple Enclosure in front of the Varāha Cave carved by Mahēndravarman I.
4. Maṇḍapa in front of the Carving of the Lifting of Mount Govardhana
5. Unfinished Building in front of Ramanuja's Maṇḍapa.

1. Sthalasayana-Perumāḷ Temple. Nothing can be said about this building; the entrance to it is forbidden to Europeans, but the whole style is of the Vijayanagara period.

2. Unfinished Monumental Gateway. This is built on a small natural plateau, part of the hill in front of the above mentioned temple. Since a temple corresponding to the magnitude of this gateway could not be built on the hill, this gateway seems to have been intended as an entrance of a prospective huge *prakara*, round the present *prakara* of the above mentioned temple. The style of this gateway is very common in the later Vijayanagara period. The gateway of the main temple at Madurantakam is exactly a reproduction of it. Unfortunately in the specimen of Mahābalipuram the structure rises but a few feet out of the ground.



Mahābalipuram. Unfinished Monumental Gateway.

Mahābalipuram. Kriṣhṇa Maṇḍapa, Pillars showing Vijayanagara Carvings.

3. Temple Enclosure in front of the Varāha Cave. The walls of this enclosure are built after the usual Vijayanagara fashion.

4. Maṇḍapa in front of the Govardhana scene. The whole construction is of the pure Vijayanagaga style of the XVI or beginning of XVII century. It cannot belong to a later period as the pendant sprouts of the capitals do not extend downward so far and in such bulk as they are found to do in the time of Tirumala Nāyaka of Madura. The carvings on the base of the pillars are the usual Vijayanagara carvings: for instance an animal in repose, half monkey, half lion, seen for the first time on the caves of Undavalli; this animal was never copied by the Pallava sculptors at Mahābalipuram but it is however very frequently found in all the Vijayanagara buildings. Another instance may be mentioned in the mat-covered male figure leaning against his staff, a common representation in Vijayanagara and in fact all over the Empire[1].

5. Building commenced in front of Ramanuja's Maṇḍapa. Since the building seems only to have just been started, one cannot say anything extensive about its style. It promised to be a temple enclosure like that built in front of the Adhivarāha Cave.

When, and by whom were all these constructions built? For our reply to this question, besides the study of the style, another fact, which was already noted by Mr. Longhurst, will help us a great deal. All these structures are Vaishṇava or in honour of something Vaishṇava: the temple of Sthalasayana-Perumāḷ, the maṇḍapa in front of the Govardhana

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[1] Cf. Heras, *Historical Carvings at Vijayanagara, Q. J. M. S.*, XVII, pp. 85-88.

scene, the Ramanuja's maṇḍapa, where the original Śaiva figures and carvings were purposely destroyed and the *śankha* and *chakra* of Vishṇu surrounded by flames were carved on the pillars. All this shows not only a period of Vaishṇava devotion, but a period of militant Vaishṇava devotion against Śaivism. No other period of modern Vijayanagara history seems to suit these circumstances better than the reign of Veṅkaṭa II (1585-1614)[1]. Even the unfinished state of some of the constructions may suggest a sudden cataclysm that stopped all works of art. Such could have been the long civil war that broke out after the death of Veṅkaṭa, and lasted for four years[2]. When Rāma II ascended the throne the works commenced at Mahābalipuram were forgotten and were never further continued[3].

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1 Cf. Heras, *The Aravidu Dynasty of Vijayanagara*, I, pp. 546-554.

2 Cf. Heras, *A Great Civil War of Vijayanagara, 1614-1618*, *J. I. H.*, V, pp. 164-188.

3 The inscription inside the Sthalasayana temple refers to a donation of a village to a temple in the reign of Sri Ranga. Cf. Rangacharya, *Inscriptions of the Madras Presidency*, I, p. 329. This Sri Ranga must be Sri Ranga I.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The importance of the architectural history of Mahābalipuram need not be emphasized. Within the small circuit of one mile we discover all the different stages of the appearance and gradual development of stone building in the Tamil-nāḍu. Mahēndravarman I claims the honours of having been the originator of the idea, when he set to carving caves, and so dispensing with brick, mortar and wood. Narasiṁhavarman I expanded the caves into stone temples hewn out of the living rock. Narasiṁhavarman II builds the craft-constructed temple of hewn and hand-placed stones; this had to develop naturally into its actual and magnificent proportions. At the same time sculpture was advancing in parallel with architecture. Finally Mahābalipuram reveals the Telugu and Kanarese architectural influence in the Tamil country and affords new models of imitation to a Chalukya king in Karṇāṭaka.

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